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TORONTO

# THE PRINCESS

AND

# MAUD

ANNOTATED

BY

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# THE PRINCESS;

A MEDLEY

## *PROLOGUE*

SIR Walter Vivian all a summer's day  
Gave his broad lawns until the set of sun  
Up to the people thither flock'd at noon  
His tenants, wife and child, and thither half  
The neighbouring borough with their Institute  
Of which he was the patron I was there  
From college, visiting the son,—the son  
A Walter too,—with others of our set,  
Five others we were seven at Vivian-place

And me that morning Walter show'd the house,  
Greek, set with busts from vases in the hall  
Flowers of all heavens, and lovelier than their names,  
Grew side by side, and on the pavement lay  
Carved stones of the Abbey-ruin in the park,  
Huge Ammonites, and the first bones of Time,  
And on the tables every clime and age

Jumbled together, celts and calumets,  
Claymore and snowshoe, toys in lava, fans  
Of sandal, amber, ancient mosaics,  
Laborious orient ivory sphere in sphere,  
The cursed Malayan crease, and battle-clubs  
From the isles of palm and higher on the walls,  
Betwixt the monstrous horns of elk and deer,  
His own forefathers' arms and armour hung

And 'this' he said 'was Hugh's at Agincourt;  
And that was old Sir Ralph's at Ascalon  
A good knight he! we keep a chronicle  
With all about him'—which he brought, and I  
Dived in a hoard of tales that dealt with knights,  
Half-legend, half-historic, counts and kings  
Who laid about them at their wills and died,  
And mixt with these, a lady, one that ann'd  
Her own fair head, and sallying thro' the gate,  
Had beat her foes with slaughter from her walls

'O miracle of women,' said the book,  
'O noble heart who, being strait-besieged  
By this wild king to force her to his wish,  
Nor bent, nor broke, nor shunn'd a soldier's death,  
But now when all was lost or seem'd as lost—  
Her stature more than mortal in the bust  
Of sunrise, her arm lifted, eyes on fire—



## PROLOGUE

Brake with a blast of trumpets from the gate,  
And, falling on them like a thunderbolt,  
She tiampled some beneath her horses' heels,  
And some were whelm'd with missiles of the wall,  
And some were push'd with lances from the rock,  
And part were drown'd within the whirling brook  
O miracle of noble womanhood !'

So sang the gallant glorious chronicle ,  
And, I all rapt in this, 'Come out,' he said,  
'To the Abbey there is Aunt Elizabeth  
And sister Lilia with the rest ' We went  
(I kept the book and had my finger in it)  
Down thro' the park strange was the sight to me ;  
' For all the sloping pasture murmur'd, sown  
With happy faces and with holiday  
There moved the multitude, a thousand heads  
The patient leaders of their Institute  
Taught them with facts. One rear'd a font of stone  
And drew, from butts of water on the slope,  
'The fountain of the moment, playing, now  
A twisted snake, and now a rain of pearls,  
On steep-up spout whereon the gilded ball  
Danced like a wisp and somewhat lower down  
A man with knobs and wires and vials fired  
A cannon Echo answer'd in her sleep  
From hollow fields and here were telescopes

For azure views , and there a group of gulls  
In circle waited, whom the electric shock  
Dislink'd with shrieks and laughter round the lake  
A little clock-work steamer paddling plied  
And shook the lilies perch'd about the knolls  
A dozen angry models jetted steam  
A petty railway ran a fire-balloon  
Rose gem-like up before the dusky groves  
And dropt a fairy parachute and past  
And there thro' twenty posts of telegraph  
They flash'd a saucy message to and fro  
Between the mimic stations , so that sport  
Went hand in hand with Science , otherwhere  
Pure sport a herd of boys with clamour bowl'd  
And stump'd the wicket , babies roll'd about  
Like tumbled fruit in grass , and men and maids  
Arranged a country dance, and flew thro' light  
And shadow, while the twangling violin  
Struck up with Soldier-laddie, and overhead  
The broad ambrosial aisles of lofty lime  
Made noise with bees and breeze from end to end

Strange was the sight and smacking of the time ,  
And long we gazed, but satiated at length  
Came to the ruins High-arch'd and ivy-claspt,  
Of finest Gothic lighter than a fire,  
Thro' one wide chasm of time and frost they gave

The park, the crowd, the house , but all within  
The swaid was trim as any garden lawn  
And here we lit on Aunt Elizabeth,  
And Lilia with the rest, and lady friends  
From neighbour seats and there was Ralph himself,  
A broken statue propt against the wall,  
As gay as any Lilia, wild with sport,  
Half child half woman as she was, had wound  
A scarf of orange round the stony helm,  
And robed the shoulders in a rosy silk,  
That made the old warrior from his ivied nook  
Glow like a sunbeam near his tomb a feast  
Shone, silver-set , about it lay the guests,  
And there we join'd them then the maiden Aunt  
Took this fair day for text, and from it preach'd  
An universal culture for the crowd,  
And all things great , but we, unworthier, told  
Of college he had climb'd across the spikes,  
And he had squeezed himself betwixt the bars,  
And he had breathed the Proctor's dogs , and one  
Discuss'd his tutor, rough to common men,  
But honeying at the whisper of a lord ,  
And one the Master, as a rogue in grain  
Veneer'd with sanctimonious theory

But while they talk'd, above their heads I saw  
The feudal warrior lady-clad , which brought

My book to mind and opening this I read  
Of old Sir Ralph a page or two that rang  
With tilt and tourney, then the tale of her  
That drove her foes with slaughter from her wall,  
And much I praised her nobleness, and 'Where,'  
Ask'd Walter, patting Lilia's head (she lay  
Beside him) 'lives there such a woman now?'

Quick answer'd Lilia 'There are thousands now  
Such women, but convention beats them down  
It is but bunting up, no more than that  
You men have done it how I hate you all!  
Ah, were I something great! I wish I were  
Some mighty poetess, I would shame you then,  
That love to keep us children! O I wish  
That I were some great princess, I would build  
Far off from men a college like a man's,  
And I would teach them all that men are taught,  
We are twice as quick!' And here she shook aside  
The hand that play'd the patron with her curls

And one said smiling 'Pretty were the sight  
If our old halls could change then sex, and flaunt  
With prudes for proctors, dowagers for deans,  
And sweet girl-graduates in their golden hair  
I think they should not wear our rusty gowns,  
But move as rich as Emperor-moths, or Ralph

Who shines so in the corner , yet I fear,  
If there were many Lillas in the brood,  
However deep you might embower the nest,  
Some boy would spy it '

At this upon the sward  
She tapt her tiny silken-sandal'd foot  
'That's your light way , but I would make it death  
For any male thing but to peep at us '

Petulant she spoke, and at herself she laugh'd ,  
A rosebud set with little wilful thorns,  
And sweet as English air could make her, she  
But Walter hail'd a score of names upon her,  
And 'petty Ogress,' and 'ungrateful Puss,'  
And swore he long'd at college, only long'd,  
All else was well, for she-society  
They boated and they cricketed , they talk'd  
At wine, in clubs, of art, of politics ,  
They lost their weeks , they vexed the souls of deans ,  
They rode , they betted , made a hundred friends,  
And caught the blossom of the flying terms,  
But miss'd the mignonette of Vivian-place,  
The little hearth-flower Lilla Thus he spoke,  
Part banter, part affection

'True,' she said,  
'We doubt not that O yes, you miss'd us much  
I'll stake my ruby ring upon it you did '

She held it out, and as a parrot turns  
 Up thro' gilt wnes a crafty loving eye,  
 And takes a lady's finger with all care,  
 And bites it for true heart and not for harm,  
 So he with Lilia's Daintily she shuck'd  
 And wrung it 'Doubt my word again!' he said  
 'Come, listen! here is proof that you were miss'd  
 We seven stay'd at Christmas up to read;  
 And there we took one tutor as to read.  
 The hard-grain'd Muses of the cube and square  
 Were out of season · never man, I think,  
 So moulder'd in a sinecure as he ·  
 For while our cloisters echo'd frosty feet,  
 And our long walks were stript as bare as brooms,  
 We did but talk you over, pledge you all  
 In wassail; often, like as many girls -  
 Sick for the hollies and the yews of home—  
 As many little trifling Liliass—play'd  
 Charades and riddles as at Christmas here,  
 And *what's my thought* and *when* and *where* and *how*,  
 And often told a tale from mouth to mouth  
 As here 'at Christmas'

She remember'd that :  
 A pleasant game, she thought · she liked it more  
 Than magic music, forfeits, all the rest.  
 But these—what kind of tales did men tell men,  
 She wonder'd, by themselves?

A half-disdain

Perch'd on the pouted blossom of her lips .  
And Walter nodded at me , ' *He* began,  
The rest would follow, each in turn , and so  
We forged a sevenfold story    Kind ? what kind ?  
Chimeras, crotchets, Christmas solecisms,  
Seven-headed monsters only made to kill  
Time by the fire in winter '

‘ Kill him now,  
The tyrant ! kill him in the summer too,’  
Said Lilia ; ‘ Why not now ?’ the maiden Aunt  
‘ Why not a summer’s as a winter’s tale ?  
A tale for summer as befits the time,  
And something it should be to suit the place,  
Heroic, for a hero lies beneath,  
Grave, solemn !’

Walter waip'd his mouth at this  
To something so mock-solemn, that I laugh'd  
And Lila woke with sudden-shrilling mirth  
An echo like a ghostly woodpecker,  
Hid in the ruins, till the maiden Aunt  
(A little sense of wrong had touch'd her face  
With colour) turn'd to me with 'As you will,  
Heroic if you will, or what you will,  
Or be yourself your hero if you will'

'Take Lilia, then, for heroine' clamour'd he,

'And make her some great Princess, six feet high,  
Giand, epic, homicidal, and be you  
The Prince to win her!'

'Then follow me, the Prince,

I answer'd, 'each be hero in his turn!  
Seven and yet one, like shadows in a dream.  
Heroic seems our Princess as required—  
But something made to suit with Time and place,  
A Gothic ruin and a Grecian house,  
A talk of college and of ladies' rights,  
A feudal knight in silken masquerade,  
And, yonder, shuiks and strange experiments  
For which the good Sir Ralph had burnt them all—  
Thus *were* a medley! we should have him back  
Who told the "Winter's tale" to do it for us.  
No matter we will say whatever comes  
And let the ladies sing us, if they will,  
From time to time, some ballad or a song  
To give us breathing-space'

So I began,

And the rest follow'd and the women sang  
Between the rougher voices of the men,  
Like linnets in the pauses of the wind.  
And here I give the story and the songs.



## I

A prince I was, blue-eyed, and fair in face,  
Of temper amorous, as the first of May,  
With lengths of yellow inglet, like a gul,  
For on my cradle shone the Northern star

There lived an ancient legend in our house  
Some sorcerer, whom a far-off grandsire burnt  
Because he cast no shadow, had foretold,  
Dying, that none of all our blood should know  
The shadow from the substance, and that one  
Should come to fight with shadows and to fall.  
For so, my mother said, the story ran  
And, truly, waking dreams were, more or less,  
An old and strange affection of the house  
Myself too had weird seizures, Heaven knows what  
On a sudden in the midst of men and day,  
And while I walk'd and talk'd as heretofore,  
I seem'd to move among a world of ghosts,  
And feel myself the shadow of a dream  
Our great court-Galen poised his gilt-head cane,

And paw'd his beard, and mutter'd 'catalepsy'  
My mother pitying made a thousand prayers ,  
My mother was as mild as any saint,  
Half-canonized by all that look'd on her,  
So gracious was her tact and tenderness  
But my good father thought a king a king ,  
He cared not for the affection of the house ,  
He held his sceptre like a pedant's wand  
To lash offence, and with long arms and hands  
Reach'd out, and pick'd offenders from the mass  
For judgment.

Now it chanced that I had been,  
While life was yet in bud and blade, betroth'd  
To one, a neighbouring Princess she to me  
Was proxy-wedded with a bootless calf  
At eight years old , and still from time to time  
Came murmurs of her beauty from the South,  
And of her brethren, youths of puissance ;  
And still I wore her picture by my heart,  
And one dark tress , and all around them both  
Sweet thoughts would swarm as bees about their queen.

But when the days drew nigh that I should wed,  
My father sent ambassadors with furs  
And jewels, gifts, to fetch her . these brought back  
A present, a great labour of the loom ,  
And therewithal an answer vague as wind .

Besides, they saw the king, he took the gifts,  
He said there was a compact, that was true  
But then she had a will, was he to blame?  
And maiden fancies, loved to live alone  
Among her women, certain, would not wed

That morning in the presence room I stood  
With Cyril and with Florian, my two friends  
The first, a gentleman of broken means  
(His father's fault) but given to starts and bursts  
Of revel, and the last, my other heart,  
And almost my half-self, for still we moved  
Together, twinn'd as horse's ear and eye

Now, while they spake, I saw my father's face  
Grow long and troubled like a rising moon,  
Inflamed with wrath he started on his feet,  
Tore the king's letter, snow'd it down, and rent  
The wonder of the loom thro' warp and woof  
From skit to skit, and at the last he swore  
That he would send a hundred thousand men,  
And bring her in a whirlwind then he chew'd  
The thrice-turn'd cud of wrath, and cook'd his spleen,  
Communing with his captains of the war

At last I spoke 'My father, let me go.  
It cannot be but some gross error lies

In this report, this answer of a king,  
Whom all men rate as kind and hospitable  
O! maybe, I myself, my bride once seen,  
Whate'er my grief to find her less than fame,  
May rue the bargain made ' And Florian said  
'I have a sister at the foreign court,  
Who moves about the Princess, she, you know,  
Who wedded with a nobleman from thence '  
He, dying lately, left her, as I hear,  
The lady of three castles in that land :  
Thro' her this matter might be sifted clean '  
And Cyril whisper'd : 'Take me with you too.'  
Then laughing 'what, if these wend seizures come  
Upon you in those lands, and no one near  
To point you out the shadow from the truth !  
Take me I'll serve you better in a strait ,  
I grate on rusty hinges here ' but 'No !'  
Roar'd the rough king, 'you shall not , we ourself  
Will crush her pretty maiden fancies dead  
In iron gauntlets break the council up.'

But when the council broke, I rose and past  
Thro' the wild woods that hung about the town ,  
Found a still place, and pluck'd her likeness out ;  
Laid it on flowers, and watch'd it lying bathed  
In the green gleam of dewy-tassell'd trees  
What were those fancies ? wherefore break her troth ?

Proud look'd the lips but while I meditated  
A wind arose and rush'd upon the South,  
And shook the songs, the whispers, and the shricks  
Of the wild woods together, and a Voice  
Went with it, 'Follow, follow, thou shalt win'

Then, ere the silver sickle of that month  
Became her golden shield, I stole from court  
With Cyril and with Florian, unperceived,  
Cat-footed thro' the town and half in dread  
To hear my father's clamour at our backs  
With Ho! from some bay-window shake the night,  
But all was quiet from the bastion'd walls  
Like threaded spiders, one by one, we dropt,  
And flying reach'd the frontier. then we crost  
To a livelier land, and so by tilth and grange,  
And vines, and blowing bosks of wildeiness,  
We gam'd the mother-city thick with towers,  
And in the imperial palace found the king.

His name was Gama, crack'd and small his voice,  
But bland the smile that like a wrinkling wind  
On glassy water drove his cheek in lines,  
A little dry old man, without a stain,  
Not like a king three days he feasted us,  
And on the fourth I spake of why we came,  
And my betroth'd. 'You do us, Prince,' he said,

And a snowy hand and signet gem,  
'All honour We remember love ourselves  
In our sweet youth there did a compact pass  
Long summers back, a kind of ceremony  
I think the year in which our olives fail'd  
I would you had her, Prince, with all my heart,  
With my full heart but there were widows here,  
Two widows, Lady Psyche, Lady Blanche,  
They fed her theories, in and out of place  
Maintaining that with equal husbandry  
The woman were an equal to the man  
They harp'd on this, with this our banquets rang  
Our dances broke and buzz'd in knots of talk,  
Nothing but this; my very ears were hot  
To hear them knowledge, so my daughter held,  
Was all in all they had but been, she thought,  
As children, they must lose the child, assume  
The woman then, Sir, awful odes she wrote,  
Too awful, sure, for what they treated of,  
But all she is and does is awful, odes  
About this losing of the child; and rhymes  
And dismal lyrics, prophesying change  
Beyond all reason. these the women sang,  
And they that know such things-- I sought but  
peace,  
No critic I--would call them masterpieces  
They master'd *me* At last she begg'd a boon,

A certain summer-palace which I have  
Hard by your father's frontier I said no,  
Yet being an easy man, gave it and there,  
All wild to found an University  
For maidens, on the spur she fled, and more  
We know not,—only this they see no men,  
Not ev'n her brother Ariac, nor the twins  
Her brethren, tho' they love her, look upon her  
As on a kind of paragon, and I  
(Pardon me saying it) were much loth to breed  
Dispute betwixt myself and mine but since  
(And I confess with right) you think me bound  
In some sort, I can give you letters to her,  
And yet, to speak the truth, I rate your chance  
Almost at naked nothing'

Thus the king,  
And I, tho' nettled that he seem'd to slun  
With garrulous ease and oily courtesies  
Our formal compact, yet, not less (all frets  
But chafing me on fire to find my bride)  
Went forth again with both my friends We rode  
Many a long league back to the North At last  
From hills, that look'd across a land of hope,  
We dropt with evening on a rustic town  
Set in a gleaming river's crescent-curve,  
Close at the boundary of the liberties,  
There, enter'd an old hostel, call'd mine host

To council, pled him with his richest wines,  
And show'd the late-writ letters of the king

He with a long low sibilation, stared  
As blank as death in marble , then exclaim'd  
Averring it was clear against all rules  
For any man to go but as his brain  
Began to mellow, ' If the king,' he said,  
' Had given us letters, was he bound to speak ?  
The king would bear him out ; ' and at the last--  
The summer of the vine in all his veins--  
' No doubt that we might make it worth his while  
She once had past that way , he heard her speak  
She scared him , life ! he never saw the like ,  
She look'd as grand as doomsday and as grave  
And he, he revered his liege-lady there ,  
He always made a point to post with maids ,  
His daughter and his housemaid were the boys  
The land, he understood, for miles about  
Was till'd by women , all the swine were sows,  
And all the dogs '—

But while he jested thus,  
A thought flash'd thro' me which I clothed in act,  
Remembering how we three presented Maid  
Or Nymph, or Goddess, at high tide of feast,  
In masque or pageant at my father's court.  
We sent mine host to purchase female gear ,



He brought it, and himself, a sight to shake  
The midriff of despan with laughter, help  
To lace us up, till, each, in maiden plumes  
We rustled him we gave a costly bribe  
To gueidon silence, mounted our good steeds,  
And boldly ventured on the liberties

We follow'd up the river as we rode,  
And rode till midnight when the college lights  
Began to glitter firefly-like in copse  
And linden alley then we past an arch,  
Whereon a woman-statue rose with wings  
From four wing'd horses dark against the stars,  
And some inscription ran along the front,  
But deep in shadow further on we gain'd  
A little street half garden and half house,  
But scarce could hear each other speak for noise  
Of clocks and chimes, like silver hammers falling  
On silver anvils, and the splash and stir  
Of fountains spouted up and showering down  
In meshes of the jasmine and the rose  
And all about us peal'd the nightingale,  
Rapt in her song, and careless of the snare

There stood a bust of Pallas for a sign,  
By two sphere lamps blazon'd like Heaven and  
Earth

With constellation and with continent,  
 Above an entry riding in, we call'd,  
 A plump-arm'd Ostleress and a stable wench  
 Came running at the call, and help'd us down  
 Then stept a buxom hostess forth, and sail'd,  
 Full-blown, before us into rooms which gave  
 Upon a pillar'd porch, the bases lost  
 In laurel - her we ask'd of that and this,  
 And who were tutors - 'Lady Blanche' she said,  
 'And Lady Psyche' - 'Which was prettiest,  
 Best-natured?' - 'Lady Psyche' - 'Hers are we,'  
 One voice, we cried; and I sat down and wrote,  
 In such a hand as when a field of corn  
 Bows all its ears before the roaring East,

'Three ladies of the Northern empire pray  
 Your Highness would enroll them with your own,  
 As Lady Psyche's pupils'

This I seal'd

The seal was Cupid bent above a scroll,  
 And o'er his head Uranian Venus hung,  
 And raised the blinding bandage from his eyes -  
 I gave the letter to be sent with dawn;  
 And then to bed, where half in doze I seem'd  
 To float about a glimmering night, and watch  
 A full sea glazed with muffled moonlight, swell  
 On some dark shore just seen that it was rich.

As thro' the land at eve we went,  
And pluck'd the ripen'd ears,  
We fell out, my wife and I,  
O we fell out I know not why,  
And kiss'd again with tears  
And blessings on the falling out  
That all the more endears,  
When we fall out with those we love  
And kiss again with tears !  
For when we came where lies the child  
We lost in other years,  
There above the little grave,  
O there above the little grave,  
We kiss'd again with tears



## II

At break of day the College Portiess came  
She brought us Academic silks, in hue  
The lilac, with a silken hood to each,  
And zoned with gold , and now when these were on,  
And we as rich as moths from dusk cocoons,  
She, curtseying her obeisance, let us know  
The Princess Ida waited out we paced,  
I first, and following thro' the porch that sang  
All round with laurel, issued in a court  
Compact of lucid maibles, boss'd with lengths  
Of classic frieze, with ample awnings gay  
Betwixt the pillais, and with great urns of flowers  
The Muses and the Graces, group'd in threes,  
Enring'd a billowing fountain in the midst ,  
And here and there on lattice edges lay  
Or book or lute , but hastily we past,  
And up a flight of stairs into the hall

There at a board by tome and paper sat,  
With two tame leopards couch'd beside her throne,  
All beauty compass'd in a female form,

The Princess, liker to the inhabitant  
Of some clear planet close upon the Sun,  
Than our man's earth ; such eyes were in her head,  
And so much grace and power, breathing down  
From over her arch'd brows, with every turn  
Lived thro' her to the tips of her long hands,  
And to her feet    She rose her height, and said

‘We give you welcome    not without redound  
Of use and glory to yourselves ye come,  
The first-fruits of the stranger    aftertime,  
And that full voice which circles round the grave,  
Will rank you nobly, mingled up with me  
What ! are the ladies of your land so tall ?’  
‘We of the court’ said Cyril    ‘From the court’  
She answer’d, ‘then ye know the Prince?’ and he .  
‘The climax of his age ! as tho’ there were  
One rose in all the world, your Highness that,  
He worships your ideal ’ she replied  
‘We scarcely thought in our own hall to hear  
This barren verbiage, current among men,  
Light coin, the tinsel clink of compliment  
Your flight from out your bookless wilds would seem  
As arguing love of knowledge and of power ;  
Your language proves you still the child    Indeed,  
We dream not of him    when we set our hand  
To this great work, we purposed with ourself

Never to wed    You likewise will do well,  
Ladies, in entering here, to cast and fling\*  
The tricks, which make us toys of men, that so,  
Some future time, if so indeed you will,  
You may with those self-styled our lords ally  
Your fortunes, justlier balanced, scale with scale '

At those high words, we conscious of ourselves,  
Perused the matting, then an officer  
Rose up, and read the statutes, such as these  
Not for three years to correspond with home,  
Not for three years to cross the liberties,  
Not for three years to speak with any men,  
And many more, which hastily subscribed,  
We enter'd on the boards    and 'Now,' she cried,  
'Ye are green wood, see ye waip not    Look, our hall!  
Our statues'! --not of those that men desire,  
Sleek Odalisques, or oracles of mode,  
Nor stunted squaws of West or East, but she  
That taught the Sabine how to rule, and she  
The foundress of the Babylonian wall,  
The Canian Artemisia strong in war,  
The Rhodope, that built the pyramid,  
Clelia, Cornelia, with the Palmyrene  
That fought Aurelian, and the Roman brows  
Of Agrippina.    Dwell with these, and lose  
Convention, since to look on noble forms

Makes noble thro' the sensuous organism  
 That which is higher O lift your natures up  
 Embrace our aims work out your freedom Child,  
 Knowledge is now no more a fountain seal'd  
 Drink deep, until the habits of the slave,  
 The sins of emptiness, gossip and spite  
 And slander, die Better not be at all  
 Than not be noble Leave us . you may go  
 To-day the Lady Psyche will harangue  
 The fresh arrivals of the week before ,  
 For they press in from all the provinces,  
 And fill the hive '

She spoke, and bowing waved

Dismissal back again we cross the court  
 To Lady Psyche's as we enter'd in,  
 There sat along the forms, like morning doves  
 That sun their milky bosoms on the thatch,  
 A patient range of pupils , she herself  
 Erect behind a desk of satin-wood,  
 A quick brunette, well-moulded, falcon-eyed,  
 And on the hither side, or so she look'd,  
 Of twenty summers At her left, a child,  
 In shining draperies, headed like a star,  
 Her maiden babe, a double April old,  
 Aglaia slept We sat the Lady glanced .  
 Then Florian, but no livelier than the dame  
 That whisper'd ' Asses' ears,' among the sedge,



'My sister' 'Comely, too, by all that's fair,'  
Said Cyril. 'O hush, hush!' and she began

'This world was once a fluid haze of light,  
Till toward the centre set the starry tides,  
And eddied into suns, that wheeling cast  
The planets then the monster, then the man,  
Tattoo'd or woaded, winter-clad in skins,  
Raw from the prime, and crushing down his mate,  
As yet we find in barbarous isles, and here  
Among the lowest'

Thereupon she took  
A bird's-eye-view of all the ungracious past,  
Glanced at the legendary Amazon  
As emblematic of a nobler age,  
Appraised the Lycian custom, spoke of those  
That lay at wine with Lar and Lucumo,  
Ran down the Persian, Grecian, Roman lines  
Of empire, and the woman's state in each,  
How far from just, till warning with her theme  
She fulminated out her scorn of laws Salique  
And little-footed China, touch'd on Mahomet  
With much contempt, and came to chivalry  
When some respect, however slight, was paid  
To woman, superstition all awry  
However then commenced the dawn a beam  
Had slanted forward, falling in a land

Of promise , fruit would follow    Deep, indeed,  
Their debt of thanks to her who first had dared  
To leap the rotten pales of prejudice,  
Disyoke then necks from custom, and assert  
None lordlier than themselves but that which made  
Woman and man    She had founded, they must build  
Here might they learn whatever men were taught  
Let them not fear    some said their heads were less  
Some men's were small , not they the least of men ,  
{ For often fineness compensated size  
Besides the brain was like the hand, and grew  
With using , thence the man's, if more was more ,  
He took advantage of his strength to be  
First in the field    some ages had been lost ,  
But woman ripen'd earlier, and her life  
Was longer , and albeit then glorious names  
Were fewer, scatter'd stars, yet since in truth  
The highest is the measure of the man,  
And not the Kaffir, Hottentot, Malay,  
Nor those horn-handed breakers of the glebe,  
But Homer, Plato, Verulam , even so  
With woman    and in arts of government  
Elizabeth and others , arts of war  
The peasant Joan and others , arts of grace  
Sappho and others vied with any man  
And, last not least, she who had left her place,  
And bow'd her state to them, that they might grow

To use and power on this Oasis, lapt  
 In the arms of leisure, sacred from the blight  
 Of ancient influence and scorn

At last

She rose upon a wind of prophecy  
 Dilating on the future ; ' everywhere  
 Two heads in council, two beside the hearth,  
 Two in the tangled business of the world,  
 Two in the liberal offices of life,  
 Two plummetts dropt for one to sound the abyss  
 Of science, and the secrets of the mind  
 Musician, painter, sculptor, critic, more  
 And everywhere the broad and bounteous Earth  
 Should bear a double growth of those rare souls,  
 Poets, whose thoughts enrich the blood of the world '

She ended here, and beckon'd us : the rest  
 Parted , and, glowing full-faced welcome, she  
 Began to address us, and was moving on  
 In gratulation, till as when a boat  
 Tacks, and the slacken'd sail flaps, all her voice  
 Faltering and fluttering in her throat, she cried  
 ' My brother ! ' ' Well, my sister. ' ' O, ' she said,  
 ' What do you here ? and in this dress ? and these ?  
 Why who are these ? a wolf within the fold !  
 A pack of wolves ! the Lord be gracious to me !  
 A plot, a plot, a plot, to ruin all ! '

'No plot, no plot,' he answer'd 'Wretched boy,  
 How saw you not the inscription on the gate,  
 LET NO MAN ENTER IN ON PAIN OF DEATH ?'  
 'And if I had,' he answer'd, 'who could think  
 The softer Adams of your Academe,  
 O sister, Shens tho' they be, were such  
 As chanted on the blanching bones of men ?'  
 'But you will find it otherwise' she said  
 'You jest all jesting with edge-tools ! my vow  
 Binds me to speak, and O that non will,  
 That axelike edge untunable, our Head,  
 The Princess' 'Well then, Psyche, take my life,  
 And nail me like a weasel on a grange  
 For warning buy me beside the gate,  
 And cut this epitaph above my bones,  
*Here lies a brother by a sister slain,  
 All for the common good of womankind*'  
 'Let me die too,' said Cyril, 'having seen  
 And heard the Lady Psyche'

I struck in

'Albert so mask'd, Madam, I love the truth,  
 Receive it, and in me behold the Prince  
 Your countryman, affianced years ago  
 To the Lady Ida : here, for here she was,  
 And thus (what other way was left) I came.'  
 'O Sir, O Prince, I have no country, none,  
 If any, this, but none Whatc'er I was

Disrooted, what I am is grafted here  
Affianced, Sir ? love-whispers may not breathe  
Within this vestal limit, and how should I,  
Who am not mine, say, live the thunderbolt  
Hangs silent, but prepare I speak, it falls'  
'Yet pause,' I said 'for that inscription there,  
I think no more of deadly lurks therein,  
Than in a clapper clapping in a gaith,  
To scare the fowl from fruit if more there be,  
If more and acted on, what follows? wai,  
Your own work man'd for this your Academe,  
Whichever side be Victor, in the halloo  
Will topple to the trumpet down, and pass  
With all fan theories only made to gild  
A stormless summer' 'Let the Princess judge  
Of that' she said. 'farewell, Sir—and to you  
I shudder at the sequel, but I go'

'Are you that Lady Psyche,' I rejoin'd,  
'The fifth in line from that old Florian,  
Yet hangs his portrait in my father's hall  
(The gaunt old Baron with his beetle brow  
Sun-shaded in the heat of dusty fights)  
As he bestrode my Grandsire, when he fell,  
And all else fled? we point to it, and we say,  
The loyal warmth of Florian is not cold,  
But branches current yet in kindred veins'

‘Are you that Psyche,’ Florian added, ‘she  
With whom I sang about the morning hills,  
Flung ball, flew kite, and raced the purple fly,  
And snared the squirrel of the glen ? are you  
That Psyche, wont to bind my throbbing brow,  
To smoothe my pillow, mix the foaming draught  
Of fever, tell me pleasant tales, and read  
My sickness down to happy dreams ? are you  
That brother-sister Psyche, both in one ?  
You were that Psyche, but what are you now ?’  
‘You are that Psyche,’ Cyril said, ‘for whom  
I would be that for ever which I seem,  
Woman, if I might sit beside your feet,  
And glean your scatter’d sapience.’

Then once more,

‘Are you that Lady Psyche,’ I began,  
‘That on her bridal morn before she part  
From all her old companions, when the king  
Kiss’d her pale cheek, declared that ancient ties  
Would still be dear beyond the southern hills,  
That were there any of our people there  
In want or peril, there was one to hear  
And help them ? look ! for such are these and I.’  
‘Are you that Psyche,’ Florian ask’d, ‘to whom,  
In gentler days, your arrow-wounded fawn  
Came flying while you sat beside the well ?  
The creature laid his muzzle on your lap,

And sobb'd, and you sobb'd with it, and the blood  
 Was sprinkled on your kittle, and you wept  
 'That was fawn's blood, not brother's, yet you wept  
 O by the bright head of my little niece,  
 You were that *Psyche*, and what are you now ?'  
 'You are that *Psyche*,' Cyril said again,  
 The mother of the sweetest little maid,  
 That ever crow'd for kisses'

' Out upon it !'

She answer'd, 'peace' and why should I not play  
 The Spartan Mother with emotion, be  
 The *Lucius Junius Brutus* of my kind ?  
 Him you call great he for the common weal,  
 The fading politics of mortal Rome,  
 As I might slay this child, if good need were,  
 Slew both his sons and I, shall I, on whom  
 The secular emancipation turns  
 Of half this world, be swerved from right to save  
 A prince, a brother ? a little will I yield  
 Best so, perchance, for us, and well for you  
 O hard, when love and duty clash ! I fear  
 My conscience will not count me fleckless, yet—  
 Hear my conditions . promise (otherwise  
 You perish) as you came, to slip away  
 To-day, to-morrow, soon it shall be said,  
 These women were too barbarous, would not learn,  
 They fled, who might have shamed us promise, all'

What could we else, we promised each , and she,  
Like some wild creature newly-caged, commenced  
A to-and-fro, so pacing till she paused  
By Florian , holding out her lily arms  
Took both his hands, and smiling faintly said  
'I knew you at the first tho' you have grown  
You scarce have alter'd I am sad and glad  
To see you, Florian I give thee to death  
My brother ! it was duty spoke, not I  
My needful seeming harshness, pardon it  
Our mother, is she well?'

With that she kiss'd

His forehead, then, a moment after, clung  
About him, and betwixt them blossom'd up  
From out a common vein of memory  
Sweet household talk, and phrases of the hearth,  
And far allusion, till the gracious dew  
Began to glisten and to fall and while  
They stood, so rapt, we gazing, came a voice,  
'I brought a message here from Lady Blanche '  
Back started she, and turning round we saw  
The Lady Blanche's daughter where she stood,  
Melissa, with her hand upon the lock,  
A rosy blonde, and in a college gown,  
That clad her like an April daffodilly  
(Her mother's colour) with her lips apart,  
And all her thoughts as fair within her eyes,



As bottom agates seen to wave and float  
In crystal currents of clear morning seas

So stood that same fair creature at the door  
Then Lady Psyche, 'Ah—Melissa—you '  
You heard us ?' and Melissa, 'O pardon me  
I heard, I could not help it, did not wish  
But, dearest Lady, pray you fear me not,  
Nor think I bear that heart within my breast,  
To give three gallant gentlemen to death '  
'I trust you,' said the other, 'for we two  
Were always friends, none closer, elm and vine  
But yet your mother's jealous temperament—  
Let not your prudence, dearest, drowse, or prove  
The Danaid of a leaky vase, for fear  
This whole foundation ruin, and I lose  
My honour, these ten lives ' 'Ah, fear me not '  
Replied Melissa, 'no—I would not tell,  
No, not for all Aspasia's cleverness,  
No, not to answer, Madam, all those hard things  
That Sheba came to ask of Solomon '  
'Be it so ' the other, 'that we still may lead  
The new light up, and culminate in peace,  
For Solomon may come to Sheba yet '  
Said Cyril, 'Madam, he the wisest man  
Feasted the woman wisest then, in halls  
Of Lebanonian cedar nor should you

(Tho', Madam, *you* should answer, *we* would ask)  
Less welcome find among us, if you came  
Among us, debtors for our lives to you,  
Myself for something more ' He said not what,  
But 'Thanks,' she answer'd 'Go we have been too  
long  
Together keep you hoods about the face ,  
They do so that affect abstraction here  
Speak little , mix not with the rest , and hold  
Your promise all, I trust, may yet be well '

We turn'd to go, but Cyril took the child,  
And held her round the knees against his waist,  
And blew the swell'd cheek of a trumpeter,  
While Psyche watch'd them, smiling, and the child  
Push'd her flat hand against his face and laugh'd ,  
And thus our conference closed.

And then we stroll'd  
For half the day thro' stately theatres  
Bench'd crescent-wise. In each we sat, we heard  
The grave Professor On the lecture slate  
The circle rounded under female hands  
With flawless demonstration · follow'd then  
A classic lecture, rich in sentiment,  
With scraps of thundrous Epic hilted out  
By violet-hooded Doctors, elegies  
And quoted odes, and jewels five-words-long

That on the stretch'd forefinger of all Time  
Sparkle for ever then we dipt in all  
That treats of whatsoever is, the state,  
The total chronicles of man, the mind,  
The morals, something of the frame, the rock,  
The star, the bird, the fish, the shell, the flower,  
Electric, chemic laws, and all the rest,  
And whatsoever can be taught and known ,  
Till like three horses that have broken fence,  
And glutted all night long breast-deep in corn,  
We issued gorged with knowledge, and I spoke  
'Why, Sirs, they do all this as well as we'  
'They hunt old trails' said Cyril 'very well ,  
But when did woman ever yet invent ?'  
'Ungacious !' answer'd Florian , 'have you learnt  
No more from Psyche's lecture, you that talk'd  
The trash that made me sick, and almost sad ?'  
'O trash' he said, 'but with a kernel in it  
Should I not call her wise, who made me wise ?  
And learnt ? I learnt more from her in a flash,  
Than if my brainpan were an empty hull,  
And every Muse tumbled a science in  
A thousand hearts lie fallow in these halls,  
And round these halls a thousand baby loves  
Fly twanging headless arrows at the hearts,  
Whence follows many a vacant pang , but O  
With me, Sir, enter'd in the bigger boy,

The Head of all the golden-shafted sim,  
The long-limb'd lad that had a Psyche too,  
He cleft me thro' the stomacher, and now  
What think you of it, Florian? do I chase  
The substance or the shadow? will it hold?  
I have no sorcerer's malison on me,  
No ghostly hauntings like his Highness.  
Flatter myself that always everywhere  
I know the substance when I see it Well,  
Are castles shadows? Three of them? Is she  
The sweet propriety a shadow? If not,  
Shall those three castles patch my tatter'd coat?  
For dear are those three castles to my wants,  
And dear is sister Psyche to my heart,  
And two dear things are one of double worth,  
And much I might have said, but that my zone  
Unmann'd me then the Doctors! O to hear  
The Doctors! O to watch the thirsty plants  
Imbibing! once or twice I thought to roar,  
To break my chain, to shake my mane but thou,  
Modulate me, Soul of mincing mimicry!  
Make liquid treble of that bassoon, my throat;  
Abase those eyes that ever loved to meet  
Star-sisters answering under crescent brows,  
Abate the stride, which speaks of man, and loose  
A flying charm of blushes o'er this cheek,  
Where they like swallows coming out of time

Will wonder why they came but hark the bell  
For dinner, let us go !'

And in we stream'd  
Among the columns, pacing staid and still  
By twos and threes, till all from end to end  
With beauties every shade of brown and fair  
In colours gayer than the morning mist,  
The long hall glitter'd like a bed of flowers  
How might a man not wander from his wits  
Pierced thro' with eyes, but that I kept mine own  
Intent on her, who rapt in glorious dreams,  
The second-sight of some Astæan age,  
Sat compass'd with professors they, the while,  
Discuss'd a doubt and tost it to and fro  
A clamour thicken'd, mixt with inmost terms  
Of art and science Lady Blanche alone  
Of faded form and haughtiest lineaments,  
With all her autumn tresses falsely brown,  
Shot sidelong daggers at us, a tiger-cat  
In act to spring

At last a solemn grace  
Concluded, and we sought the gardens there  
One walk'd reciting by herself, and one  
In this hand held a volume as to read,  
And smoothed a petted peacock down with that  
Some to a low song oar'd a shallop by,  
Or under arches of the marble bridge

Hung, shadow'd from the heat some hid and sought  
In the orange thickets others tost a ball  
Above the fountain-jets, and back again  
With laughter others lay about the lawns,  
Of the older sort, and murmur'd that then May  
Was passing · what was learning unto them ?  
They wish'd to marry ; they could rule a house ,  
Men hated learned women but we three  
Sat muffled like the Fates , and often came  
Melissa hitting all we saw with shafts  
Of gentle satire, kin to charity,  
That harm'd not then day droopt , the chapel bells  
Call'd us we left the walks , we mixt with those  
Six hundred maidens clad in purest white,  
Before two streams of light from wall to wall,  
While the great organ almost buist his pipes,  
Groaning for power, and rolling thro' the court  
A long melodious thunder to the sound  
Of solemn psalms, and silver litanies,  
The work of Ida, to call down from Heaven  
A blessing on her labours for the world

Sweet and low, sweet and low,  
    Wind of the western sea,  
Low, low, breathe and blow,  
    Wind of the western sea !  
Over the rolling waters go,  
Come from the dying moon, and blow,  
    Blow him again to me ,  
While my little one, while my pretty one, sleeps

Sleep and rest, sleep and rest,  
    Father will come to thee soon ,  
Rest, rest, on mother's breast,  
    Father will come to thee soon ,  
Father will come to his babe in the nest,  
Silver sails all out of the west  
    Under the silver moon  
Sleep, my little one, sleep, my pretty one, sleep





### III

Morn in the white wake of the morning star  
Came furowing all the orient into gold  
We rose, and each by other drest with care  
Descended to the court that lay three parts  
In shadow, but the Muses' heads were touch'd  
Above the darkness from their native East

There while we stood beside the fount, and watch'd  
O! seem'd to watch the dancing bubble, approach'd  
Melissa, tinged with wan from lack of sleep,  
Or grief, and glowing round her dewy eyes  
The circled liss of a night of tears,  
'And fly,' she cried, 'O fly, while yet you may'  
My mother knows ' and when I ask'd her 'how,'  
'My fault' she wept 'my fault' and yet not mine,  
Yet mine in part O hear me, pardon me  
My mother, 'tis her wont from night to night  
'To rail at Lady Psyche and her side.  
She says the Princess should have been the Head,  
Herself and Lady Psyche the two aims

And so it was agreed when first they came ,  
 But Lady Psyche was the right hand now,  
 And she the left, or not, or seldom used ,  
 Hers more than half the students, all the love  
 And so last night she fell to canvass you  
*Her* countrywomen ! she did not envy her  
 "Who ever saw such wild barbarians ?  
 Girls?—more like men !" and at these words the snake,  
 My secret, seem'd to stir within my breast ,  
 And oh, Sus, could I help it, but my cheek  
 Began to burn and burn, and her lynx eye  
 To fix and make me hotter, till she laugh'd  
 "O marvellously modest maiden, you '  
 Men ! girls, like men ! why, if they had been men  
 You need not set your thoughts in rubric thus  
 For wholesale comment " Pardon, I am shamed  
 That I must needs repeat for my excuse  
 What looks so little graceful "men" (for still  
 My mother went revolving on the word)  
 "And so they are,—very like men indeed—  
 And with that woman closeted for hours !"

Then came these dreadful words out one by one,  
 "Why—these—*are*—men " I shudder'd "and you  
 know it "

"O ask me nothing," I said "And she knows too,  
 And she conceals it " So my mother clutch'd  
 The truth at once, but with no word from me ,

And now thus early risen she goes to inform  
The Princess . Lady Psyche will be crush'd ,  
But you may yet be saved, and therefore fly  
But heal me with your pardon ere you go '

‘What pardon, sweet Melissa, for a blush?’  
Said Cyril ‘Pale one, blush again than wear  
Those lilies, better blush our lives away  
Yet let us breathe for one hour more in Heaven’  
He added, ‘lest some classic Angel speak  
In scorn of us, “They mounted, Ganymedes,  
To tumble, Vulcans, on the second moyn”  
But I will melt this marble into wax  
To yield us farther foulough ’ and he went

Melissa shook her doubtful curls, and thought  
He scarce would prosper ‘Tell us’ Florian ask'd,  
‘How grew this feud betwixt the right and left’  
‘O long ago,’ she said, ‘betwixt these two  
Division smoulders hidden, ’tis my mother,  
Too jealous, often fretful as the wind  
Pent in a crevice much I bear with her  
I never knew my father, but she says  
(God help her) she was wedded to a fool,  
And still she rail'd against the state of things.  
She had the care of Lady Ida's youth,  
And from the Queen's decease she brought her up

But when your sister came she won the heart  
 Of Ida they were still together, grew  
 (For so they said themselves) inosculated ,  
 Consonant chords that shiver to one note ,  
 One mind in all things yet my mother still  
 Affirms you Psyche thieved her theories,  
 And angled with them for her pupil's love  
 She calls her plagiarist , I know not what  
 But I must go I dare not tarry,' and light,  
 As flies the shadow of a bud, she fled

Then murmur'd Florian gazing after her,  
 'An open-hearted maiden, true and pure  
 If I could love, why this were she ' how pretty  
 Her blushing was, and how she blush'd again,  
 As if to close with Cyril's random wish  
 Not like your Princess clogg'd with erasing pride,  
 Nor like poor Psyche whom she drags in tow '

'The crane,' I said, 'may chatter of the crane,  
 The dove may murmur of the dove, but I  
 An eagle clang an eagle to the sphere  
 My princess, O my princess ! true she enns,  
 But in her own grand way being herself  
 Three times more noble than three score of men,  
 She sees herself in every woman else,  
 And so she wears her error like a crown

To blind the truth and me for her, and hei,  
Hebes aie they to hand ambrosia, mix  
The nectar, but—ah she—whene'er she moves  
The Samian Herè rises and she speaks  
A Memnon smitten with the morning Sun '

So saying from the court we paced, and gain'd  
The terrace ranged along the Northern front,  
And leaning there on those balusters, high  
Above the empurpled champaign, drank the gale  
That blown about the foliage underneath,  
And sated with the innumerable rose,  
Beat balm upon our eyelids Hither came  
Cyril, and yawning 'O hard task,' he cried,  
'No fighting shadows here! I forced a way  
Thro' solid opposition crabb'd and gnarl'd  
Better to clear prime forests, heave and thump  
A league of street in summer solstice down,  
Than hammer at this reverend gentlewoman.  
I knock'd and, bidden, enter'd, found her there  
At point to move, and settled in her eyes  
The green malignant light of coming storm  
Sir, I was courteous, every phrase well-oil'd,  
As man's could be, yet maiden-meek I pray'd  
Concealment she demanded who we were,  
And why we came? I fabled nothing fair,  
But, your example pilot, told her all

Up went the hush'd amaze of hand and eye  
But when I dwelt upon your old affiancé,  
She answer'd sharply that I talk'd astray  
I urged the fiece inscription on the gate,  
And our three lives True—we had limed ourselves  
With open eyes, and we must take the chance.  
But such extremes, I told her, well might harm  
The woman's cause "Not more than now," she said,  
"So puddled as it is with favouritism "  
I tried the mother's heart Shame might befall  
Melissa, knowing, saying not she knew  
Her answer was "Leave me to deal with that "  
I spoke of war to come and many deaths,  
And she replied, her duty was to speak,  
And duty duty, clear of consequences  
I grew discouraged, Sir ; but since I knew  
No rock so hard but that a little wave  
May beat admission in a thousand years,  
I recommenced , "Decide not ere you pause  
I find you here but in the second place,  
' Some say the third—the authentic foundress you.  
I offer boldly we will seat you highest .  
Wink at our advent help my prince to gain  
His rightful bride, and here I promise you  
Some palace in our land, where you shall reign  
The head and heart of all our fair she-world,  
And your great name flow on with broadening time

For ever " Well, she balanced this a little,  
And told me she would answer us to-day,  
Meantime be mute thus much, no more I gain'd '

He ceasing, came a message from the Head  
'That afternoon the Princess rode to take  
The dip of certain strata to the North  
Would we go with her ? we should find the land  
Worth seeing, and the river made a fall  
Out yonder ' then she pointed on to where  
A double hill ran up his furrowy forks  
Beyond the thick-leaved platans of the vale

Agreed to, this, the day fled on thro' all  
Its range of duties to the appointed hour  
Then summon'd to the porch we went She stood  
Among her maidens, higher by the head,  
Her back against a pillar, her foot on one  
Of those tame leopards Kittenlike he roll'd  
And paw'd about her sandal I drew near,  
I gazed On a sudden my strange seizure came  
Upon me, the weird vision of our house  
The Princess Ida seem'd a hollow show,  
Her gay-fur'd cats a painted fantasy,  
Her college and her maidens, empty masks,  
And I myself the shadow of a dream,  
For all things were and were not Yet I felt

My heart beat thick with passion and with awe ,  
Then from my breast the involuntary sigh  
Broke, as she smote me with the light of eyes  
That lent my knee desire to kneel, and shook  
My pulses, till to horse we got, and so  
Went forth in long retinue following up  
The river as it narrow'd to the hills.

I rode beside her and to me she said ,  
'O friend, we trust that you esteem'd us not  
Too harsh to your companion yesternorn ,  
Unwillingly we spake ' 'No—not to her,'  
I answer'd, 'but to one of whom we spake  
Your Highness might have seem'd the thing you  
say'  
'Again ?' she cried, 'are you ambassadors  
From him to me? we give you, being strange,  
A license . speak, and let the topic die'

I stammer'd that I knew him—could have wish'd---  
'Our king expects—was there no precontract?  
There is no true-hearted—ah, you seem  
All he prefigured, and he could not see  
The bird of passage flying south but long'd  
To follow . surely, if your Highness keep  
Your purport, you will shock him ev'n to death,  
Or base courses, children of despair.'



‘Poor boy,’ she said, ‘can he not read—no books?  
Quoit, tennis, ball—no games? nor deals in that  
Which men delight in, martial exercise?  
To nurse a blind ideal like a gulf,  
Methinks he seems no better than a gulf,  
As gulfs were once, as we ourself have been  
We had our dreams, perhaps he mixt with them.  
We touch on our dead self, nor shun to do it,  
Being other—since we learnt our meaning here,  
To lift the woman’s fall’n divinity  
Upon an even pedestal with man’

She paused, and added with a haughtier smile  
‘And as to precontracts, we move, my friend,  
At no man’s beck, but know ourself and thee,  
O Vashti, noble Vashti! Summon’d out  
She kept her state, and left the drunken king  
To brawl at Shushan underneath the palms’

‘Alas your Highness breathes full East,’ I said,  
‘On that which leans to you I know the Prince,  
I prize his truth and then how vast a work  
To assail this gray preeminence of man!  
You grant me license, might I use it? think,  
Ere half be done perchance your life may fail,  
Then comes the feeble heiress of your plan,  
And takes and ruins all, and thus your pains

May only make that footprint upon sand  
 Which old-recurring waves of prejudice  
 Resmooth to nothing might I dread that you,  
 With only Fame for spouse and your great deeds  
 For issue, yet may live in vain, and miss,  
 Meanwhile, what every woman counts her due,  
 Love, children, happiness ?'

And she exclaim'd,

'Peace, you young savage of the Northern wild !  
 What ! tho' your Prince's love were like a God's,  
 Have we not made ourself the sacrifice ?  
 You are bold indeed we are not talk'd to thus  
 Yet will we say for children, would they grew  
 Like field-flowers everywhere ! we like them well  
 But children die , and let me tell you, girl,  
 Howe'er you babble, great deeds cannot die ,  
 They with the sun and moon renew their light  
 For ever, blessing those that look on them  
 Children—that men may pluck them from our hearts,  
 Kill us with pity, break us with ourselves  
 O—children—there is nothing upon earth  
 More miserable than she that has a son  
 And sees him eir nor would we work for fame ;  
 Tho' she perhaps might reap the applause of Great,  
 Who learns the one for so whence after-wards  
 May move the world, tho' she herself effect  
 But little wherefore up and act, nor shrink

For fear our solid aim be dissipated  
By frail successors    Would, indeed, we had been,  
In lieu of many mortal flies, a race  
Of giants living, each, a thousand years,  
That we might see our own work out, and watch  
The sandy footprint harden into stone '

I answer'd nothing, doubtful in myself  
If that strange Poet-princess with her grand  
Imaginations might at all be won  
And she broke out interpreting my thoughts .

'No doubt we seem a kind of monster to you ,  
We are used to that for women, up till this  
Cramp'd under worse than South-sea-isle taboo,  
Dwarfs of the gynæceum, fail so far  
In high desue, they know not, cannot guess  
How much their welfare is a passion to us  
If we could give them sure, quicker proof—  
Oh if our end were less achievable  
By slow approaches, than by single act  
Of immolation, any phase of death,  
We were as prompt to spring against the pikes,  
Or down the fiery gulf as talk of it,  
To compass our dear sisters' liberties '

She bow'd as if to veil a noble tear ,

And up we came to where the river sloped  
To plunge in cataract, shattering on black blocks  
A breadth of thunder. O'er it shook the woods,  
And danced the colour, and, below, stuck out  
The bones of some vast bulk that lived and roared  
Before man was. She gazed awhile and said,  
'As these rude bones to us, are we to her  
That will be' 'Dare we dream of that,' I ask'd,  
'Which wrought us, as the workman and his work,  
That practice betters?' 'How,' she cried, 'you love  
The metaphysics' read and earn our prize,  
A golden brooch beneath an emerald plane  
Sits Diotima, teaching him that died  
Of hemlock, our device, wrought to the life,  
She rapt upon her subject, he on her  
For there are schools for all' 'And yet' I said  
'Methinks I have not found among them all  
One anatomic' 'Nay, we thought of that,'  
She answer'd, 'but it pleased us not. in truth  
We shudder but to dream our maids should ape  
Those monstrous males that carve the living hound,  
And cram him with the fragments of the grave,  
Or in the dark dissolving human heart,  
And holy secrets of this microcosm,  
Dabbling a shameless hand with shameful jest,  
Encarnalize their spouts: yet we know  
Knowledge is knowledge, and this matter hangs

Howbeit ourself, foreshewing casualty,  
Not willing men should come among us, learnt,  
For many weary moons before we came,  
This craft of healing    Were you sick, ourself  
Would tend upon you.    To your question now,  
Which touches on the workman and his work  
Let there be light and there was light . 'tis so  
For was, and is, and will be, are but is ,  
And all creation is one act at once,  
The birth of light    but we that are not all,  
As parts, can see but parts, now this, now that,  
And live, perforce, from thought to thought, and make  
One act a phantom of succession    thus  
Our weakness somehow shapes the shadow, Time ,  
But in the shadow will we work, and mould  
The woman to the fuller day'

She spake

With kindled eyes    we rode a league beyond,  
And, o'er a bridge of pinewood crossing, came  
On flowery levels underneath the crag,  
Full of all beauty    'O how sweet' I said  
(For I was half-oblivious of my mask)  
'To linger here with one that loved us'    'Yea,'  
She answer'd, 'or with fair philosophies  
That lift the fancy, for indeed these fields  
Are lovely, lovelier not the Elysian lawns,  
Where paced the Demigods of old, and saw

The soft white vapour streak the crowned towers  
Built to the Sun ' then, turning to her maids,  
'Pitch our pavilion here upon the sward ;  
Lay out the viands' At the word, they raised  
A tent of satin, elaborately wrought  
With fair Corinna's triumph , here she stood,  
Engirt with many a florid maiden cheek,  
The woman-conqueror ; woman-conquer'd there  
The bearded Victor of ten-thousand hymns,  
And all the men mourn'd at his side but we  
Set forth to climb , then, climbing, Cyril kept  
With Psyche, with Melissa Florian, I  
With mine affianced Many a little hand  
Glanced like a touch of sunshine on the rocks,  
Many a light foot shone like a jewel set  
In the dark crag and then we turn'd, we wound  
About the cliffs, the copses, out and in,  
Hammering and clinking, chattering stony names  
Of shale and hornblende, rag and trap and tuff,  
Amygdaloid and trachyte, till the Sun  
Grew broader toward his death and fell, and all  
The rosy heights came out above the lawns

The splendour falls on castle walls  
And snowy summits old in story  
The long light shakes across the lakes,  
And the wild cataract leaps in glory  
Blow, bugle, blow, set the wild echoes flying,  
Blow, bugle, answer, echoes, dying, dying, dying

O hark, O hear ! how thin and clear,  
And thinner, clearer, farther going !  
O sweet and far from cliff and scar  
The horns of Elfland faintly blowing !  
Blow, let us hear the purple glens replying  
Blow, bugle, answer, echoes, dying, dying, dying

O love, they die in yon rich sky,  
They faint on hill or field or river  
Our echoes roll from soul to soul,  
And grow for ever and for ever  
Blow, bugle, blow, set the wild echoes flying,  
And answer, echoes, answer, dying, dying, dying





#### IV

‘There sinks the nebulous star we call the Sun,  
If that hypothesis of theirs be sound’  
Said Ida, ‘let us down and rest,’ and we  
Down from the lean and wrinkled precipices,  
By every coppice-feather’d chasm and cleft,  
Dropt thro’ the ambrosial gloom to where below  
No bigger than a glow-worm shone the tent  
Lamp-lit from the inner Once she lean’d on me,  
Descending, once or twice she lent her hand,  
And blissful palpitations in the blood,  
Stirring a sudden transport rose and fell

But when we planted level feet, and dipt  
Beneath the satin dome and enter’d in,  
There leaning deep in broider’d down we sank  
Our elbows on a tripod in the midst  
A fragrant flame rose, and before us glow’d  
Fruit, blossom, viand, amber wine, and gold.

Then she, ‘Let some one sing to us lighter move

The minutes fledged with music ' and a maid,  
Of those beside her, smote her harp, and sang

‘ Tears, idle tears, I know not what they mean,  
Tears from the depth of some divine despair  
Rise in the heart, and gather to the eyes,  
In looking on the happy Autumn fields,  
And thinking of the days that are no more

‘ Fresh as the first beam glittering on a sail,  
That brings our friends up from the underworld,  
Sad as the last which reddens over one  
That sinks with all we love below the verge ,  
So sad, so fresh, the days that are no more

‘ Ah, sad and strange as in dark summer dawns  
The earliest pipe of half-awaken'd buds  
To dying ears, when unto dying eyes  
The casement slowly grows a glimmering square ,  
So sad, so strange, the days that are no more

‘ Dear as remember'd kisses after death,  
And sweet as those by hopeless fancy feign'd  
On lips that are for others , deep as love,  
Deep as first love, and wild with all regret ,  
O Death in Life, the days that are no more ’

She ended with such passion that the tear,  
She sang of, shook and fell, an erring pearl  
Lost in her bosom but with some disdain  
Answer'd the Princess, ‘ If indeed there haunt  
About the moulder'd lodges of the Past  
So sweet a voice and vague, fatal to men,

Well needs it we should cram our ears with wool  
And so pace by but thine are fancies hatch'd  
In silken-folded idleness ; nor is it  
Wiser to weep a true occasion lost,  
But trim our sails, and let old by-gones be,  
While down the streams that float us each and all  
To the issue, goes, like glittering bergs of ice,  
Throne after throne, and molten on the waste  
Becomes a cloud for all things serve then time  
Toward that great year of equal nights and  
nights,

Nor would I fight with non laws, in the end  
Found golden let the past be past , let be  
Their cancell'd Babels tho' the rough kex break  
The star'd mosaic, and the beard-blown goat  
Hang on the shaft, and the wild fig-tree split  
Their monstrous idols, care not while we hear  
A trumpet in the distance pealing news  
Of better, and Hope, a poising eagle, burns  
Above the unrisen morrow ' then to me ,  
' Know you no song of your own land,' she said,  
' Not such as moans about the retrospect,  
But deals with the other distance and the hues  
Of promise , not a death's-head at the wine '

Then I remember'd one myself had made,  
What time I watch'd the swallow winging south

From mine own land, part made long since, and part  
Now while I sang, and maidenlike as fair  
As I could ape then treble, did I sing.

‘O Swallow, Swallow, flying, flying South,  
Fly to her, and fall upon her gilded eaves,  
And tell her, tell her, what I tell to thee

‘O tell her, Swallow, thou that knowest each,  
That bright and fierce and fickle is the South,  
And dark and true and tender is the North

‘O Swallow, Swallow, if I could follow, and light  
Upon her lattice, I would pipe and tulle,  
And cheep and twitter twenty million loves

‘O were I thou that she might take me in,  
And lay me on her bosom, and her heart  
Would rock the snowy cradle till I died

‘Why lingereth she to clothe her heart with love,  
Delaying as the tender ash delays  
To clothe herself, when all the woods are green?

‘O tell her, Swallow, that thy brood is flown  
Say to her, I do but wanton in the South,  
But in the North long since my nest is made

‘O tell her, brief is life but love is long,  
And brief the sun of summer in the North,  
And brief the moon of beauty in the South

‘O Swallow, flying from the golden woods,  
Fly to her, and pipe and woo her, and make her mine,  
And tell her, tell her, that I follow thee.’

*A MEDLEY*

I ceased, and all the ladies, each at each,  
Like the Ithacensian suitors in old time,  
Stared with great eyes, and laugh'd with alien lips,  
And knew not what they meant, for still my voice  
Rang false but smiling 'Not for thee,' she said,  
'O Bulbul, any rose of Gulistan  
Shall burst her veil: marsh-divers, rather, maid,  
Shall croak thee sister, or the meadow-crake  
Grate her harsh kindred in the grass. and this  
A mere love-poem! O for such, my friend,  
We hold them slight: they mind us of the time  
When we made bricks in Egypt Knaves are men,  
That lute and flute fantastic tenderness,  
And dress the victim to the offering up  
And paint the gates of Hell with Paradise,  
And play the slave to gain the tyranny  
Poor soul! I had a maid of honour once;  
She wept her true eyes blind for such a one,  
A rogue of canzonets and serenades  
I loved her. Peace be with her She is dead  
So they blaspheme the muse! But great is song  
Used to great ends: ourself have often tried  
Valkyrian hymns, or into rhythm have dash'd  
The passion of the prophetess, for song  
Is due unto freedom, force and growth  
Of spirit than to junketing and love  
Love is it? Would this same mock-love, and this

Mock-Hymen were laid up like winter bats,  
Till all men grew to rate us at our worth,  
Not vassals to be beat, nor pretty babes  
To be dandled, no, but living wills, and sphered  
Whole in ourselves and owed to none    Enough !  
But now to leaven play with profit, you,  
Know you no song, the true growth of your soil,  
That gives the manners of your country women ?'

She spoke and turn'd her sumptuous head with eyes  
Of shining expectation fixt on mine  
Then while I diagg'd my brains for such a song,  
Cyril, with whom the bell-mouth'd glass had wrought,  
Or master'd by the sense of sport, began  
To toll a careless, careless tavern-catch  
Of Moll and Meg, and strange experiences  
Unmeet for ladies    Florian nodded at him,  
I frowning, Psyche flush'd and wann'd and shook ,  
The lilylike Melissa droop'd her brows ,  
'Forbear,' the Princess cried, 'Forbear, Sir !'  
And heated thro' and thro' with wrath and love,  
I smote him on the breast, he started up ;  
There rose a shriek as of a city sack'd ,  
Melissa clamour'd 'Flee the death,' 'To horse'  
Said Ida, 'home ! to horse !' and fled, as flies  
A troop of snowy doves athwart the dusk,  
When some one batters at the dovecote-doors,

Disorderly the women    Alone I stood  
With Florian, cursing Cyril, vexed at heart,  
In the pavilion    there like parting hopes  
I heard them passing from me . hoof by hoof,  
And every hoof a knell to my desires,  
Clang'd on the bridge , and then another shriek,  
'The Head, the Head, the Princess, O the Head !'  
For blind with rage she miss'd the plank, and roll'd  
In the river    Out I sprang from glow to gloom  
There whirl'd her white robe like a blossom'd branch  
Rapt to the horrible fall    a glance I gave,  
No more , but woman-vested as I was  
Plunged , and the flood drew , yet I caught her , then  
Oaring one arm, and bearing in my left  
The weight of all the hopes of half the world,  
Strove to buffet to land in vain    A tree  
Was half-disrooted from his place and stoop'd  
To drench his dark locks in the gurgling wave  
Mid-channel    Right on this we drove and caught,  
And grasping down the boughs I gain'd the shore

There stood her maidens glimmeringly group'd  
In the hollow bank    One reaching forward drew  
My burthen from mine arms , they cried 'she lives .'   
They bore her back into the tent    but I,  
So much a kind of shame within me wrought,  
Not yet endured to meet her opening eyes,

Nor found my friends , but push'd alone on foot  
(For since her horse was lost I left her mine)  
Across the woods, and less from Indian craft  
Than beelike instinct hiveward, found at length  
The garden portals Two great statues, Art  
And Science, Caryatids, lifted up  
A weight of emblem, and betwixt were valves  
Of open-work in which the hunter rued  
His rash intrusion, manlike, but his brows  
Had sprouted, and the branches thereupon  
Spread out at top, and grimly spiked the gates.

A little space was left between the horns,  
Thro' which I clamber'd o'er at top with pain,  
Dropt on the sward, and up the linden walks,  
And, tost on thoughts that changed from hue to hue,  
Now poring on the glowworm, now the star,  
I paced the terrace, till the Bear had wheel'd  
Thro' a great arc his seven slow suns

A step

Of lightest echo, then a loftier form  
Than female, moving thro' the uncertain gloom,  
Disturb'd me with the doubt 'if this were she,'  
But it was Florian 'Hist O Hist,' he said,  
'They seek us . out so late is out of rules  
Moreover 'seize the strangers' is the cry  
How came you here?' I told him 'I' said he,



'Last of the train, a moral leper, I,  
 To whom none spake, half-sick at heart, return'd.  
 Arriving all confused among the rest  
 With hooded brows I crept into the hall,  
 And, couch'd behind a Judith, underneath  
 The head of Holofernes peep'd and saw  
 Girl after girl was call'd to trial each  
 Disclaim'd all knowledge of us last of all,  
 Melissa trust me, Su, I pitied her  
 She, question'd if she knew us men, at first  
 Was silent, closer prest, denied it not  
 And then, demanded if her mother knew,  
 Or Psyche, she affirm'd not, or denied  
 From whence the Royal mind, familiar with her,  
 Easily gather'd either guilt She sent  
 For Psyche, but she was not there, she call'd  
 For Psyche's child to cast it from the doors,  
 She sent for Blanche to accuse her face to face,  
 And I slept out but whither will you now?  
 And where are Psyche, Cyril? both are fled  
 What, if together? that were not so well  
 Would rather we had never come! I dread  
 His wildness, and the chances of the dark'

'And yet,' I said, 'you wrong him more than I  
 That struck him this is proper to the clown,  
 Tho' smock'd, or fun'd and purpled, still the clown,

To harm the thing that trusts him, and to shame  
That which he says he loves for Cyril, howe'er  
He deal in frolic, as to-night—the song  
Might have been worse and sinn'd in grosser lips  
Beyond all pardon—as it is, I hold  
These flashes on the surface are not he  
He has a solid base of temperament  
But as the waterlily starts and slides  
Upon the level in little puffs of wind,  
Tho' anchor'd to the bottom, such is he'

Scarce had I ceased when from a tamarisk near  
Two Proctors leapt upon us, crying, 'Names.'  
He, standing still, was clutch'd, but I began  
To thrid the musky-circled mazes, wind  
And double in and out the boles, and race  
By all the fountains fleet I was of foot.  
Before me shower'd the rose in flakes, behind  
I heard the puff'd pursuer, at mine ear  
Bubbled the nightingale and heeded not,  
And secret laughter tickled all my soul  
At last I hook'd my ankle in a vine,  
That claspt the feet of a Mnemosyne,  
And falling on my face was caught and known

They haled us to the Princess where she sat  
High in the hall above her droop'd a lamp,

And made the single jewel on her brow  
Burn like the mystic fire on a mast-head,  
Prophet of storm a handmaid on each side  
Bow'd toward her, combing out her long black hair  
Damp from the river, and close behind her stood  
Eight daughters of the plough, stronger than men,  
Huge women blowzed with health, and wind, and rain  
And labour Each was like a Druid rock,  
Or like a spire of land that stands apart  
Cleft from the main, and wail'd about with mews

Then, as we came, the crowd dividing clove  
An advent to the throne and therebeside,  
Half-naked as if caught at once from bed  
And tumbled on the purple footcloth, lay  
The lily-shining child, and on the left,  
Bow'd on her palms and folded up from wrong,  
Her round white shoulder shaken with her sobs,  
Melissa knelt, but Lady Blanche erect  
Stood up and spake, an affluent orator

'It was not thus, O Princess, in old days  
You prized my counsel, lived upon my lips  
I led you then to all the Castales,  
I fed you with the milk of every Muse,  
I loved you like this kneeler, and you me  
Your second mother those were gracious times

Then came your new friend you began to change—  
I saw it and grieved—to slacken and to cool,  
Till taken with her seeming openness  
You turn'd your warmer currents all to her,  
To me you froze this was my meed for all  
Yet I bore up in part from ancient love,  
And partly that I hoped to win you back,  
And partly conscious of my own deserts,  
And partly that you were my civil head,  
And chiefly you were born for something great,  
In which I might your fellow-worker be,  
When time should serve, and thus a noble scheme  
Grew up from seed we two long since had sown,  
In us true growth, in her a Jonah's gourd,  
Up in one night and due to sudden sun  
We took this palace, but even from the first  
You stood in your own light and darken'd mine  
What student came but that you plan'd her path  
To Lady Psyche, younger, not so wise,  
A foreigner, and I your countrywoman,  
I your old friend and tried, she new in all?  
But still her lists were swell'd and mine were lean,  
Yet I bore up in hope she would be known  
Then came these wolves *they* knew her *they* endured,  
Long-closeted with her the yesternorn,  
To tell her what they were, and she to hear  
And me none told not less to an eye like mine

A lidless watcher of the public weal,  
Last night, their mask was patent, and my foot  
Was to you but I thought again I fear'd  
To meet a cold "We thank you, we shall hear of it  
From Lady Psyche " you had gone to her,  
She told, perforce, and winning easy grace,  
No doubt, for slight delay, remain'd among us  
In our young nursery still unknown, the stem  
Less grain than touchwood, while my honest heat  
Were all miscounted as malignant haste  
To push my rival out of place and power  
But public use required she should be known,  
And since my oath was ta'en for public use,  
I broke the letter of it to keep the sense  
I spoke not then at first, but watch'd them well,  
Saw that they kept apart, no mischief done,  
And yet this day (tho' you should hate me for it)  
I came to tell you, found that you had gone,  
Ridd'n to the hills, she likewise now, I thought,  
That surely she will speak, if not, then I  
Did she? These monsters blazon'd what they were,  
According to the coarseness of their kind,  
For thus I hear, and known at last (my work)  
And full of cowardice and guilty shame,  
I giant in her some sense of shame, she flies,  
And I remain on whom to wreak your rage,  
I, that have lent my life to build up yours,

I that have wasted here health, wealth, and time,  
And talent, I—you know it—I will not boast  
Dismiss me, and I prophesy your plan,  
Divorced from my experience, will be chaff  
For every gust of chance, and men will say  
We did not know the real light, but chased  
The wisp that flickers where no foot can tread'

She ceased the Princess answer'd coldly, 'Good  
Your oath is broken we dismiss you go  
For this lost lamb (she pointed to the child)  
Our mind is changed. we take it to ourself'

Thereat the Lady stretch'd a vulture throat,  
And shot from crooked lips a haggard smile  
'The plan was mine I built the nest' she said  
'To hatch the cuckoo. Rise!' and stoop'd to updrag  
Melissa she, half on her mother propt,  
Half-drooping from her, turn'd her face, and cast  
A liquid look on Ida, full of prayer,  
Which melted Florian's fancy as she hung,  
A Niobean daughter, one arm out,  
Appealing to the bolts of Heaven, and while  
We gazed upon her came a little stir  
About the doors, and on a sudden rush'd  
Among us, out of breath, as one pursued,  
A woman-post in flying raiment Fear

Stared in her eyes, and chalk'd her face, and wing'd  
Her transit to the throne, whereby she fell  
Delivering seal'd dispatches which the Head  
Took half-amazed, and in her lion's mood  
Tore open, silent we with blind surmise  
Regarding, while she read, till over brow  
And cheek and bosom brake the wrathful bloom  
As of some fire against a stormy cloud,  
When the wild peasant lights himself, the rick  
Flames, and his anger reddens in the heavens,  
For anger most it seem'd, while now her breast,  
Beaten with some great passion at her heart,  
Palpitated, her hand shook, and we heard  
In the dead hush the papers that she held  
Rustle at once the lost lamb at her feet  
Sent out a bitter bleating for its dam,  
The plaintive cry jarr'd on her ire, she crush'd  
The scrolls together, made a sudden turn  
As if to speak, but, utterance failing her,  
She whirl'd them on to me, as who should say  
'Read,' and I read—two letters—one her sire's

'Fair daughter, when we sent the Prince your way  
We knew not your ungracious laws, which learnt,  
We, conscious of what temper you are built,  
Came all in haste to hinder wrong, but fell  
Into his father's hands, who has this night,

You lying close upon his territory,  
Slipt round and in the dark invested you,  
And here he keeps me hostage for his son '

The second was my father's running thus  
'You have our son touch not a hair of his head  
Render him up unscathed give him your hand  
Cleave to your contract tho' indeed we hear  
You hold the woman is the better man ,  
A rampant heresy, such as if it spread  
Would make all women kick against their Lords  
Thro' all the world, and which might well deserve  
That we this night should pluck your palace down ,  
And we will do it, unless you send us back  
Our son, on the instant, whole '

So far I read ,  
And then stood up and spoke impetuously

'O not to pry and peer on your reserve,  
But led by golden wishes, and a hope  
The child of regal compact, did I break  
Your precinct , not a scorner of your sex  
But veneiator, zealous it should be  
All that it might be hear me, for I bear,  
Tho' man, yet human, whatsoe'er your wrongs,  
From the flaxen curl to the gray lock a life  
Less mine than yours. my nurse would tell me of you ,



I babbled for you, as babies for the moon,  
Vague brightness, when a boy, you stoop'd to me  
From all high places, lived in all fair lights,  
Came in long breezes lapt from inmost south  
And blown to inmost north; at eve and dawn  
With Ida, Ida, Ida, rang the woods,  
The leader wildswan in among the stars  
Would clang it, and lapt in wreaths of glow worm light  
The mellow breaker mumbled Ida Now,  
Because I would have reach'd you, had you been  
Sphered up with Cassiopeia, or the enthroned  
Persephonè in Hades, now at length,  
Those winters of abeyance all worn out,  
A man I came to see you but, indeed,  
Not in this frequency can I lend full tongue,  
O noble Ida, to those thoughts that wait  
On you, then centre let me say but this,  
That many a famous man and woman, town  
And landskip, have I heard of, after seen  
The dwarfs of presage tho' when known, there grew  
Another kind of beauty in detail  
Made them worth knowing, but in you I found  
My boyish dream involved and dazzled down  
And master'd, while that after beauty makes  
Such head from act to act, from hour to hour,  
Within me, that except you slay me here,  
According to your bitter statute-book,

I cannot cease to follow you, as they say  
The seal does music , who desire you more  
Than growing boys then manhood , dying lips,  
With many thousand matters left to do,  
The breath of life , O more than poor men wealth,  
Than sick men health—yours, yours, not mine—but  
half

Without you , with you, whole , and of those halves  
You worthiest ; and howe'er you block and bar  
Your heart with system out from mine, I hold  
That it becomes no man to nurse despair,  
But in the teeth of clench'd antagonisms  
To follow up the worthiest till he die  
Yet that I came not all unauthorized  
Behold your father's letter.'

On one knee

Kneeling, I gave it, which she caught, and dash'd  
Unopen'd at her feet a tide of fierce  
Invective seem'd to wait behind her lips,  
As waits a river level with the dam  
Ready to burst and flood the world with foam .  
And so she would have spoken, but there rose  
A hubbub in the court of half the maids  
Gather'd together from the illumined hall  
Long lanes of splendour slanted o'er a press  
Of snowy shoulders, thick as herded ewes,  
And rainbow robes, and gems and gemlike eyes.

And gold and golden heads , they to and fro  
 Fluctuated, as flowers in storm, some red, some pale,  
 All open-mouth'd, all gazing to the light,  
 Some crying there was an army in the land,  
 And some that men were in the very walls,  
 And some they cared not , till a clamour grew  
 As of a new-world Babel, woman-built,  
 And worse-confounded high above them stood  
 The placid marble Muses, looking peace

Not peace she look'd, the Head . but rising up  
 Robed in the long night of her deep hair, so  
 To the open window moved, remaining there  
 Fixt like a beacon-tower above the waves  
 Of tempest, when the crimson-rolling eye  
 Glares ruin, and the wild birds on the light  
 Dash themselves dead. She stretch'd her arms and  
     call'd  
 Across the tumult and the tumult fell

‘ What fear ye, brawlers? am not I your Head?  
 On me, me, me, the storm first breaks / dare  
 All these male thunderbolts what is it ye fear?  
 Peace! there are those to avenge us and they come  
 If not,—myself were like enough, O girls,  
 To unfurl the maiden banner of our rights,  
 And clad in iron burst the ranks of war,

O! falling, protomartyr of our cause,  
Die yet I blame you not so much for fear ,  
Six thousand years of fear have made you that  
From which I would redeem you but for those  
That stir this hubbub—you and you—I know  
Your faces there in the crowd—to-morrow morn  
We hold a great convention then shall they  
That love their voices more than duty, learn  
With whom they deal, dismiss'd in shame to live  
No wiser than their mothers, household stuff,  
Live chattels, minceis of each other's fame,  
Full of weak poison, turnspits for the clown,  
The drunkard's football, laughing-stocks of Time,  
Whose brains are in their hands and in their heels,  
But fit to flaunt, to dress, to dance, to thum,  
To tramp, to scream, to burnish, and to scow,  
For ever slaves at home and fools abroad'

She, ending, waved her hands thereat the crowd  
Muttering, dissolved then with a smile, that look'd  
A stroke of cruel sunshine on the cliff,  
When all the glens are drown'd in azure gloom  
Of thunder-shower, she floated to us and said

'You have done well and like a gentleman,  
And like a prince you have our thanks for all  
And you look well too in your woman's dress .

Well have you done and like a gentleman  
You saved our life we owe you bitter thanks  
Better have died and spilt our bones in the flood—  
Then men had said—but now—What hinders me  
To take such bloody vengeance on you both?—  
Yet since our father—Wasps in our good hive,  
You would-be quencher of the light to be,  
Barbarians, grosser than your native bears—  
O would I had his sceptre for one hour !  
You that have dared to break our bound, and gull'd  
Our servants, wrong'd and lied and thwarted us—  
I wed with thee ! I bound by precontract  
Your bride, your bondslave ! not tho' all the gold  
That veins the world were pack'd to make your crown,  
And every spoken tongue should lord you Sn,  
Your falsehood and yourself are hateful to us .  
I trample on your offers and on you  
Begone • we will not look upon you more  
Here, push them out at gates '

In wrath she spake

Then those eight mighty daughters of the plough  
Bent their broad faces toward us and address'd  
Their motion twice I sought to plead my cause,  
But on my shoulder hung their heavy hands,  
The weight of destiny so from her face  
They push'd us, down the steps, and thro' the court,  
And with grim laughter thrust us out at gates

We cross'd the street and gain'd a petty mound  
Beyond it, whence we saw the lights and heard  
The voices mumbling While I listen'd, came  
On a sudden the weird seizure and the doubt  
I seem'd to move among a world of ghosts,  
The Princess with her monstrous woman-guard,  
The jest and earnest working side by side,  
The cataract and the tumult and the kings  
Were shadows, and the long fantastic night  
With all its doings had and had not been,  
And all things were and were not

This went by

As strangely as it came, and on my spirits  
Settled a gentle cloud of melancholy,  
Not long, I shook it off, for spite of doubts  
And sudden ghostly shadowings I was one  
To whom the touch of all mischance but came  
As night to him that sitting on a hill  
Sees the midsummer, midnight, Norway sun  
Set into sunrise; then we moved away.

Thy voice is heard thro' rolling drums,  
That beat to battle where he stands,  
Thy face across his fancy comes,  
And gives the battle to his hands  
A moment, while the trumpets blow,  
He sees his brood about thy knee,  
The next, like fire he meets the foe,  
And strikes him dead for thine and thee

So Lilia sang we thought her half-possess'd,  
She struck such warbling fury thro' the words,  
And, after, feigning pique at what she call'd  
The railleiy, or grotesque, or false sublime—  
Like one that wishes at a dance to change  
The music—clapt her hands and cried for war,  
Or some grand fight to kill and make an end  
And he that next inherited the tale  
Half turning to the broken statue, said,  
'Sir Ralph has got your colours if I prove  
Your knight, and fight your battle, what for  
me?'

It chanced, her empty glove upon the tomb  
Lay by her like a model of her hand

She took it and she flung it    ‘Fight’ she said,  
‘And make us all we would be, great and good’  
He knightlike in his cap instead of casque,  
A cap of Tyrol borrow’d from the hall,  
Arranged the favour, and assumed the Prince



## V

Now, scarce three paces measured from the mound,  
We stumbled on a stationary voice,  
And 'Stand, who goes?' 'Two from the palace' I  
'The second two. they wait,' he said, 'pass on ,  
His Highness wakes ' and one, that clash'd in arms,  
By glimmering lanes and walls of canvas led  
Threading the soldier-city, till we heard  
The drowsy folds of our great ensign shake  
From blazon'd lions o'er the imperial tent  
Whispers of war

Entering, the sudden light  
Dazed me half-blind I stood and seem'd to hear,  
As in a poplar grove when a light wind wakes  
A hisping of the innumerable leaf and dies,  
Each hissing in his neighbour's ear, and then  
A strangled titter, out of which there brake  
On all sides, clamouring etiquette to death,  
Unmeasured mirth, while now the two old kings  
Began to wag their baldness up and down,  
The fresh young captains flash'd their glittering teeth,

The huge bush bearded Barons heaved and blew,  
And slain with laughter roll'd the gilded Squire

At length my Sire, his rough cheek wet with tears,  
Panted from weary sides 'King, you are free !  
We did but keep you surety for our son,  
If this be he,—or a draggled mawkin, thou,  
That tends her hustled gunters in the sludge '   
For I was diench'd with ooze, and torn with briars,  
More crumpled than a poppy from the sheath,  
And all one rag, disprinc'd from head to heel.  
Then some one sent beneath his vaulted palm  
A whisper'd jest to some one near him, 'Look,  
He has been among his shadows.' 'Satan take  
The old women and their shadows ! (thus the King  
Roar'd) make yourself a man to fight with men  
Go Cyril told us all '

As boys that slunk  
From ferule and the trespass-chiding eye,  
Away we stole, and transient in a trice  
From what was left of faded woman-slough  
To sheathing splendours and the golden scale  
Of harness, issued in the sun, that now  
Leapt from the dewy shoulders of the Earth,  
And hit the Northern hills Here Cyril met us  
A little shy at first, but by and by  
We twain, with mutual pardon ask'd and given

For stroke and song, resolden'd peace, whereon  
Follow'd his tale    Amazed he fled away  
Thro' the dark land, and later in the night  
Had come on Psyche weeping    'then we fell  
Into your father's hand, and there she lies,  
But will not speak, nor stir '

He show'd a tent

A stone-shot off    we enter'd in, and there  
Among piled arms and rough accoutrements,  
Pitiful sight, wrapp'd in a soldier's cloak,  
Like some sweet sculpture draped from head to foot,  
And push'd by rude hands from its pedestal,  
All her fair length upon the ground she lay  
And at her head a follower of the camp,  
A chair'd and wrinkled piece of womanhood,  
Sat watching like a watcher by the dead

Then Flouan knelt, and 'Come' he whisper'd to  
her,  
'Lift up your head, sweet sister    lie not thus  
What have you done but right? you could not slay  
Me, nor your prince    look up    be comforted  
Sweet is it to have done the thing one ought,  
When fall'n in darker ways'    And likewise I  
'Be comforted    have I not lost her too,  
In whose least act abides the nameless charm  
That none has else for me?'    She heard, she moved,

She moan'd, a folded voice , and up she sat,  
And raised the cloak from brows as pale and smooth  
As those that mourn half-shrouded over death  
In deathless marble ' Hic,' she said, ' my friend—  
Parted from her—betray'd her cause and mine—  
Where shall I breathe ? why kept ye not your faith ?  
O base and bad ! what comfort ? none for me !'  
To whom remorseful Cyril, ' Yet I pray  
Take comfort live, dear lady, for your child !'  
At which she lifted up her voice and cried

' Ah me, my babe, my blossom, ah, my child,  
My one sweet child, whom I shall see no more !  
For now will cruel Ida keep her back ,  
And either she will die from want of care,  
Or sicken with ill-usage, when they say  
The child is hers—for every little fault,  
The child is hers , and they will beat my girl  
Remembering her mother O my flower !  
Or they will take her, they will make her hard,  
And she will pass me by in after-life  
With some cold reverence worse than were she dead  
Ill mother that I was to leave her there,  
To lag behind, scared by the cry they made,  
The horror of the shame among them all  
But I will go and sit beside the doors,  
And make a wild petition night and day,

Until they hate to hear me like a wind  
 Wailing for ever, till they open to me,  
 And lay my little blossom at my feet,  
 My babe, my sweet Aglaia, my one child  
 And I will take her up and go my way,  
 And satisfy my soul with kissing her.  
 Ah ! what might that man not deserve of me  
 Who gave me back my child ?' 'Be comforted,'  
 Said Cyril, 'you shall have it ' but again  
 She veil'd her brows, and prone she sank, and so  
 Like tender things that being caught feign death,  
 Spoke not, nor stirr'd

By this a murmur ran  
 Thro' all the camp and inward raged the scouts  
 With rumour of Prince Aiac hard at hand  
 We left her by the woman, and without  
 Found the gray kings at parle and 'Look you ' cried  
 My father 'that our compact be fulfill'd  
 You have spoilt this child, she laughs at you and man  
 She wrongs herself, her sex, and me, and him .  
 But red-faced war has rods of steel and fire ,  
 She yields, or war '

Then Gama turn'd to me .  
 'We fear, indeed, you spent a stormy time  
 With our strange girl and yet they say that still  
 You love her. Give us, then, your mind at large  
 How say you, wai or not ?'

‘Not war, if possible,  
O king,’ I said, ‘lest from the abuse of war,  
The deseciated shrine, the trampled year,  
The smouldering homestead, and the household flower  
Torn from the lintel—all the common wrong—  
A smoke go up thro’ which I loom to her  
Three times a monster now she lightens scorn  
At him that mars her plan, but then would hate  
(And every voice she talk’d with ratify it,  
And every face she look’d on justify it)  
The general foe More soluble is this knot,  
By gentleness than war I want her love  
What were I nigher this altho’ we dash’d  
Your cities into shards with catapults,  
She would not love,—or brought her chain’d, a slave,  
The lifting of whose eyelash is my lord,  
Not ever would she love, but brooding turn  
The book of scorn, till all my fitting chance  
Were caught within the record of her wrongs,  
And crush’d to death and rather, Sue, than this  
I would the old God of war himself were dead,  
Forgotten, rusting on his iron hills,  
Rotting on some wild shore with ribs of wreck,  
Or like an old-world mammoth bulk’d in ice,  
Not to be molten out’

And roughly spake  
My father, ‘Tut, you know them not, the guls

Boy, when I hear you prate I almost think  
 That idiot legend credible    Look you, Sir !  
 Man is the hunter , woman is his game  
 The sleek and shining creatures of the chase,  
 We hunt them for the beauty of their skins ,  
 They love us for it, and we ride them down  
 Wheedling and siding with them !    Out ! for shame !  
 Boy, there's no rose that's half so dear to them  
 As he that does the thing they dare not do,  
 Breathing and sounding beauteous battle, comes  
 With the air of the trumpet round him, and leaps in  
 Among the women, snares them by the score  
 Flatter'd and fluster'd, wins, tho' dash'd with death  
 He reddens what he kisses    thus I won  
 Your mother, a good mother, a good wife,  
 Worth winning , but this firebrand—gentleness  
 To such as her ! if Cyril spake her true,  
 To catch a dragon in a cherry net,  
 To trip a tigress with a gossamer,  
 Were wisdom to it '

'Yea but Sue,' I cried,  
 'Wild natures need wise curbs    The soldier?    No  
 What dares not Ida do that she should prize  
 The soldier?    I beheld her, when she rose  
 The yesternight, and storming in extremes,  
 Stood for her cause, and flung defiance down  
 Gagelike to man, and had not shunn'd the death,

No, not the soldier's yet I hold her, king,  
True woman but you clash them all in one,  
That have as many differences as we  
The violet varies from the lily as far  
As oak from elm one loves the soldier, one  
The silken priest of peace, one this, one that,  
And some unworthily, then sinless faith,  
A maiden moon that sparkles on a sky,  
Glorifying clown and satyr, whence they need  
More breadth of culture · is not Ida right?  
They worth it? truer to the law within?  
Severer in the logic of a life?  
Twice as magnetic to sweet influences  
Of earth and heaven? and she of whom you speak,  
My mother, looks as whole as some science  
Creation minted in the golden moods  
Of sovereign artists; not a thought, a touch,  
But pure as lines of green that streak the white  
Of the first snowdrop's inner leaves, I say,  
Not like the piebald miscellany, man,  
Bursts of great heart and slips in sensual mure,  
But whole and one. and take them all-in-all,  
Were we ourselves but half as good, as kind,  
As truthful, much that Ida claims as right  
Had ne'er been mooted, but as frankly theirs  
As dues of Nature. To our point · not war.  
Lest I lose all.'



‘Nay, nay, you spake but sense’  
Said Gama ‘We remember love ourself  
In our sweet youth, we did not rate him then  
This red-hot iron to be shaped with blows.  
You talk almost like Ida *she* can talk,  
And there is something in it as you say  
But you talk kindlier we esteem you for it —  
He seems a gracious and a gallant Prince,  
I would he had our daughter for the rest,  
Our own detention, why, the causes weigh’d,  
Fatherly fears—you used us courteously—  
We would do much to gratify you Prince—  
We pardon it, and for your ingress here  
Upon the skirt and fringe of our fair land,  
You did but come as goblins in the night,  
Not in the furrow broke the ploughman’s head,  
Nor burnt the grange, nor buss’d the milking-maid,  
Not robb’d the farmer of his bowl of cream  
But let your Prince (our royal word upon it,  
He comes back safe) ride with us to our lines,  
And speak with Arac Arac’s word is thrice  
As ours with Ida something may be done—  
I know not what—and ours shall see us friends  
You, likewise, our late guests, if so you will,  
Follow us. who knows? we four may build some  
plan  
Foursquare to opposition’

Here he reach'd  
White hands of farewell to my sue, who growl'd  
An answer which, half-muffled in his beard,  
Let so much out as gave us leave to go

Then rode we with the old king across the lawns  
Beneath huge trees, a thousand rings of Spring  
In every bole, a song on every spray  
Of birds that piped their Valentines, and woke  
Desire in me to infuse my tale of love  
In the old king's ears, who promised help, and oozed  
All o'er with honey'd answer as we rode  
And blossom-fragrant slept the heavy dews  
Gather'd by night and peace, with each light air  
On our mail'd heads but other thoughts than Peace  
Burnt in us, when we saw the embattled squares,  
And squadrons of the Prince, trampling the flowers  
With clamour for among them rose a cry  
As if to greet the king, they made a halt,  
The horses yell'd, they clash'd their arms, the drum  
Beat, merrily-blowing shrill'd the martial fife,  
And in the blast and bray of the long horn  
And serpent-throated bugle, undulated  
The banner anon to meet us lightly pranced  
Three captains out, nor ever had I seen  
Such thews of men the midmost and the highest  
Was Aiac. all about his motion clung

The shadow of his sister, as the beam  
Of the East, that play'd upon them, made them glance  
Like those three stars of the airy Giant's zone,  
That glitter burnish'd by the frosty dark ,  
And as the fiery Sirius alters hue,  
And bickers into red and emerald, shone  
Their motions, wash'd with morning, as they came

And I that prated peace, when first I heard  
War-music, felt the blind wildbeast of force,  
Whose home is in the sinews of a man,  
Stun in me as to strike then took the king  
His three broad sons , with now a wandering hand  
And now a pointed finger, told them all  
A common light of smiles at our disguise  
Broke from their lips, and, ere the windy jest  
Had labour'd down within his ample lungs,  
The genial giant, Arac, roll'd himself  
Thrice in the saddle, then burst out in words

' Our land invaded, 'sdeath ! and he himself  
Your captive, yet my father wills not war  
And, 'sdeath ! myself, what care I, war or no ?  
But then this question of your troth remains  
And there's a downright honest meaning in her ,  
She flies too high, she flies too high ! and yet  
She ask'd but space and fairplay for her scheme ,

She prest and prest it on me—I myself,  
 What know I of these things? but, life and soul!  
 I thought her half-right talking of her wrongs,  
 I say she flies too high, 'sdeath! what of that?  
 I take her for the flower of womankind,  
 And so I often told her, right or wrong,  
 And, Pince, she can be sweet to those she loves,  
 And, right or wrong, I care not this is all,  
 I stand upon her side she made me swear it—  
 'Sdeath—and with solemn rites by candle-light—  
 Swear by St something—I forget her name—  
 Her that talk'd down the fifty wisest men,  
*She* was a princess too, and so I swore  
 Come, this is all, she will not waive your claim  
 If not, the foughten field, what else, at once  
 Decides it, 'sdeath! against my father's will'

I lagg'd in answer loth to render up  
 My precontract, and loth by brainless war  
 To cleave the rift of difference deeper yet,  
 Till one of those two brothers, half aside  
 And fingering at the hair about his lip,  
 To prick us on to combat 'Like to like!  
 The woman's garment hid the woman's heart'  
 A taunt that clench'd his purpose like a blow!  
 For fiery-shot was Cynl's counter-scoff,  
 And sharp I answer'd, touch'd upon the point

Where idle boys are cowards to their shame,  
 'Decide it here why not? we are three to three.'

Then spake the third 'But three to three? no  
 more?

No more, and in our noble sister's cause?  
 More, more, for honour every captain waits  
 Hungry for honour, angry for his king  
 More, more, some fifty on a side, that each  
 May breathe himself, and quick! by overthrow  
 Of these or those, the question settled die'

'Yea,' answer'd I, 'for this wild wreath of an,  
 This flake of rainbow flying on the highest  
 Foam of men's deeds—this honour, if ye will  
 It needs must be for honour if at all.  
 Since, what decision? if we fail, we fail,  
 And if we win, we fail she would not keep  
 Her compact' 'Scdath! but we will send to her,'  
 Said Aiac, 'worthy reasons why she should  
 Bide by this issue let our missive thio',  
 And you shall have her answer by the word'

'Boys!' shriek'd the old king, but vainlier than a  
 hen  
 To her false daughters in the pool, for none  
 Regarded, neither seem'd there more to say.

Back rode we to my father's camp, and found  
He thrice had sent a herald to the gates,  
To learn if Ida yet would cede our claim,  
Or by denial flush her babbling wells  
With her own people's life three times he went  
The first, he blew and blew, but none appear'd  
He batter'd at the doors, none came the next,  
An awful voice within had warn'd him thence  
The third, and those eight daughters of the plough  
Came sallying thro' the gates, and caught his hand,  
And so belabour'd him on rib and cheek  
They made him wild not less one glance he caught  
Thro' open doors of Ida station'd there  
Unshaken, clinging to her purpose, firm  
Tho' compass'd by two armies and the noise  
Of arms, and standing like a stately Pine  
Set in a cataract on an island-crag,  
When storm is on the heights, and right and left  
Suck'd from the dark heart of the long hills roll  
The torrents, dash'd to the vale and yet her will  
Bred will in me to overcome it or fall

But when I told the king that I was pledged  
To fight in tourney for my bride, he clash'd  
His iron palms together with a cry,  
Himself would tilt it out among the lads  
But overborne by all his bearded lords

With reasons drawn from age and state, perforce  
He yielded, wroth and red, with fierce demur  
And many a bold knight started up in heat,  
And sware to combat for my claim till death.

All on this side the palace ran the field  
Flat to the garden-wall · and likewise here,  
Above the garden's glowing blossom-belts,  
A column'd entry shone and marble stairs,  
And great bronze valves, emboss'd with Tomyris  
And what she did to Cyrus after fight,  
But now fast barr'd so here upon the flat  
All that long morn the lists were hammer'd up,  
And all that morn the heralds to and fro,  
With message and defiance, went and came,  
Last, Ida's answer, in a royal hand,  
But shaken here and there, and rolling words  
Oration-like I kiss'd it and I read

‘O brother, you have known the pangs we felt,  
What heats of indignation when we heard  
Of those that iron-cramp'd their women's feet,  
Of lands in which at the altar the poor bride  
Gives her harsh groom for bridal-gift a scourge,  
Of living hearts that crack within the fire  
Where smoulder then dead despots, and of those,—  
Mothers,—that, all prophetic pity, fling

Then pretty maids in the running flood, and swoops  
 The vulture, beak and talon, at the heart  
 Made for all noble motion and I saw  
 That equal baseness lived in sleeker times  
 With smoother men the old leaven leaven'd all.  
 Millions of throats would bawl for civil rights,  
 No woman named therefore I set my face  
 Against all men, and lived but for mine own.  
 Far off from men I built a fold for them.  
 I stored it full of rich memorial  
 I fenced it round with gallant institutes,  
 And biting laws to scare the beasts of prey  
 And prosper'd, till a rout of saucy boys  
 Brake on us at our books, and marr'd our peace,  
 Mask'd like our maids, blustering I know not what  
 Of insolence and love, some pretext held  
 Of baby troth, invalid, since my will  
 Seal'd not the bond—the stuplings!—for their  
 sport!—

I tamed my leopards shall I not tame these?  
 Or you? or I? for since you think me touch'd  
 In honour—what, I would not aught of false—  
 Is not our cause pure? and whereas I know  
 Your prowess, Atac, and what mother's blood  
 You draw from, fight, you failing, I abide  
 What end soever fail you will not Still  
 Take not his life he usk'd it for my own,



His mother lives . yet whatsoe'er you do,  
Fight and fight well , strike and strike home    O dear  
Brothers, the woman's Angel guards you, you  
The sole men to be mingled with our cause,  
The sole men we shall prize in the after-time,  
Your very armour hallow'd, and your statues  
Rear'd, sung to, when, this gad-fly brush'd aside,  
We plant a solid foot into the Time,  
And mould a generation strong to move  
With claim on claim from right to right, till she  
Whose name is yoked with children's, know herself,  
And Knowledge in our own land make her free,  
And, ever following those two crowned twins,  
Commerce and conquest, shower the fiery grain  
Of freedom broadcast over all that oiks  
Between the Northern and the Southern morn '

Then came a postscript dash'd across the rest  
' See that there be no traitors in your camp  
We seem a nest of traitors—none to trust  
Since our arms fail'd—this Egypt-plague of men !  
Almost our maids were better at their homes,  
Than thus man-gudled here    indeed I think  
Our chiefest comfort is the little child  
Of one unworthy mother , which she left  
She shall not have it back . the child shall grow  
To prize the authentic mother of her mind

I took it for an hour in mine own bed  
 This morning there the tender orphan hands  
 Felt at my heart, and seem'd to chain from thence  
 The wraith I nursed against the world    farewell '

I ceased , he said, 'Stubborn, but she may sit  
 Upon a king's right hand in thunder-storms,  
 And breed up warriors ! See now, tho' yourself  
 Be dazzled by the wildfire Love to sloughs  
 That swallow common sense, the spindling king,  
 This Gama swamp'd in lazy tolerance.  
 When the man wants weight, the woman takes it up,  
 And topples down the scales , but this is fixt  
 As are the roots of earth and base of all ,  
 Man for the field and woman for the hearth .  
 Man for the sword and for the needle she  
 Man with the head and woman with the heart :  
 Man to command and woman to obey ,  
 All else confusion    Look you ! the gray mare  
 Is ill to live with, when her whinny shrills  
 From tile to scullery, and her small goodman  
 Shrinks in his arm-chair while the fires of Hell  
 Mix with his hearth    but you—she's yet a colt—  
 Take, break her . strongly groom'd and straitly  
           curb'd  
 She might not rank with those detestable  
 That let the bantling scald at home, and brawl

Then rights or wrongs like potherbs in the street  
They say she's comely, there's the fairest chance  
/ like her none the less for rating at her '  
Besides, the woman wed is not as we,  
But suffers change of frame    A lusty brace  
Of twins may weed her of her folly    Boy,  
The bearing and the training of a child  
Is woman's wisdom '

Thus the hard old king .

I took my leave, for it was nearly noon  
I pored upon her letter which I held,  
And on the little clause 'take not his life '  
I mused on that wild morning in the woods,  
And on the 'Follow, follow, thou shalt win '  
I thought on all the wrathful king had said,  
And how the strange betrothment was to end  
Then I remember'd that blunt sorcerer's curse  
That one should fight with shadows and should  
fall ,

And like a flash the weird affection came  
King, camp and college turn'd to hollow shows ,  
I seem'd to move in old memorial tilts,  
And doing battle with forgotten ghosts,  
To dream myself the shadow of a dream  
And ere I woke it was the point of noon,  
The lists were ready    Empanoplied and plumed  
We enter'd in, and waited, fifty there

Opposed to fifty, till the trumpet blared  
At the barrier like a wild horn in a land  
Of echoes, and a moment, and once more  
The trumpet, and again at which the storm  
Of galloping hoofs bare on the ridge of spears  
And riders front to front, until they closed  
In conflict with the crash of shivering points,  
And thunder Yet it seem'd a dream, I dream'd  
Of fighting On his haunches rose the steed,  
And into fiery splinters leapt the lance,  
And out of stricken helmets sprang the fire  
Part sat like rocks . part reel'd but kept their seats  
Part roll'd on the earth and rose again and drew  
Part stumbled mixt with floundering horses Down  
From those two bulks at Arac's side, and down  
From Arac's arm, as from a giant's flail,  
The large blows rain'd, as here and everywhere  
He rode the mellay, lord of the ringing lists,  
And all the plain,—brand, mace, and shaft, and  
shield—

Shock'd, like an iron-clanging anvil bang'd  
With hammers, till I thought, can this be he  
From Gama's dwarfish loins? if this be so,  
The mother makes us most—and in my dream  
I glanced aside, and saw the palace-front  
Alive with fluttering scarfs and ladies' eyes,  
And highest, among the statues, statuelike,

Between a cymbal'd Miriam and a Jacl,  
With Psyche's babe, was Ida watching us,  
A single band of gold about her hair,  
Like a Saint's glory up in heaven but she  
No saint—inexorable—no tenderness—  
Too hard, too cruel yet she sees me fight,  
Yea, let her see me fall ' with that I drave  
Among the thickest and bore down a Prince,  
And Cyril, one Yea, let me make my dream  
All that I would. But that large-moulded man,  
His visage all agrin as at a wake,  
Made at me thro' the press, and, staggeuing back  
With stroke on stroke the horse and horseman, came  
As comes a pillar of electric cloud,  
Flaying the roofs and sucking up the drains,  
And shadowing down the champaign till it strikes  
On a wood, and takes, and breaks, and cracks, and  
splits,  
And twists the grain with such a roar that Earth  
Reels, and the herdsmen cry, for everything  
Gave way before him only Florian, he  
That loved me closer than his own right eye,  
Thrust in between, but Arac rode him down  
And Cyril seeing it, push'd against the Prince,  
With Psyche's colour round his helmet, tough,  
Strong, supple, sinew-corded, apt at arms,  
But tougher, heavier, stronger, he that smote

And thiew him last I spurr'd, I felt my veins  
Stretch with fierce heat, a moment hand to hand,  
And sword to sword, and horse to horse we hung,  
Till I struck out and shouted, the blade glanced,  
I did but shear a feather, and dream and truth  
Flow'd from me, darkness closed me, and I fell

Home they brought her warrior dead  
She nor swoon'd, nor utter'd cry  
All her maidens, watching, said,  
‘She must weep or she will die’

Then they praised him, soft and low,  
Call'd him worthy to be loved,  
Truest friend and noblest foe,  
Yet she neither spoke nor moved

Stole a maiden from her place,  
Lightly to the warrior stept,  
Took the face-cloth from the face,  
Yet she neither moved nor wept.

Rose a nurse of ninety years,  
Set his child upon her knee—  
Like summer tempest came her tears—  
‘Sweet my child, I live for thee.’





## VI

My dream had never died or lived again  
As in some mystic middle state I lay ,  
Seeing I saw not, hearing not I heard  
Tho', if I saw not, yet they told me all  
So often that I speak as having seen

For so it seem'd, or so they said to me,  
That all things grew more tragic and more strange ,  
That when our side was vanquish'd and my cause  
For ever lost, there went up a great cry,  
The Prince is slain    My father heard and ran  
In on the lists, and there unlaced my casque  
And grovell'd on my body, and after him  
Came Psyche, sorrowing for Aglaja.

But high upon the palace Ida stood  
With Psyche's babe in arm    there on the roofs  
Like that great dame of Lapidoth she sang

‘ Our enemies have fall'n, have fall'n    the seed,  
The little seed they laugh'd at in the dark,

Has risen and cleft the soil, and grown a bulk  
Of spanless girth, that lays on every side  
A thousand aims and rushes to the Sun

‘Our enemies have fall’n, have fall’n they came ,  
The leaves were wet with women’s tears they heard  
A noise of songs they would not understand  
They mark’d it with the red cross to the fall,  
And would have strown it, and are fall’n themselves

‘Our enemies have fall’n, have fall’n they came,  
The woodmen with their axes to the tree ‘  
But we will make it faggots for the hearth,  
And shape it plank and beam for roof and floor,  
And boats and bridges for the use of men

‘Our enemies have fall’n, have fall’n they struck ,  
With their own blows they hurt themselves, nor knew  
There dwelt an iron nature in the grain  
The glittering axe was broken in their aims,  
Their aims were shatter’d to the shoulder blade

‘Our enemies have fall’n, but this shall grow  
A night of Summer from the heat, a breadth  
Of Autumn, dropping fruits of power and roll’d  
With music in the growing breeze of Time,  
The tops shall strike from star to star, the fangs  
Shall move the stony bases of the world

‘And now, O maids, behold our sanctuary  
Is violate, our laws broken fear we not  
To break them more in their behoof, whose aims  
Champion’d our cause and won it with a day  
Blanch’d in our annals, and perpetual feast,

When dames and heroines of the golden year  
Shall strip a hundred hollows bare of Spring,  
To gain an April of ovation round  
Then statues, borne aloft, the three • but come,  
We will be liberal, since our rights are won  
Let them not lie in the tents with coarse mankind,  
Ill nurses, but descend, and proffer these  
The brethren of our blood and cause, that there  
Lie bruised and maim'd, the tender ministries  
Of female hands and hospitality'

She spoke, and with the babe yet in her arms,  
Descending, burst the great bronze valves, and led  
A hundred maids in train across the Park  
Some cowl'd, and some bare-headed, on they came,  
Then feet in flowers, her loveliest by them went  
The enamour'd air sighing, and on their curls  
From the high tree the blossom wavering fell,  
And over them the tremulous isles of light  
Slided, they moving under shade. but Blanche  
At distance follow'd so they came anon  
Thro' open field into the lists they wound  
Timorously, and as the leader of the herd  
That holds a stately fretwork to the Sun,  
And follow'd up by a hundred airy does,  
Steps with a tender foot, light as on air,  
The lovely, lordly creature floated on

To where her wounded brethren lay, there stay'd,  
Knelt on one knee,—the child on one,—and priest  
Then hands, and call'd them dear deliverers,  
And happy warriors, and immortal names,  
And said ' You shall not lie in the tents but here,  
And nursed by those for whom you fought, and served  
With female hands and hospitality '

Then, whether moved by this, or was it chance,  
She past my way. Up started from my side  
The old lion, glaring with his whelpless eye,  
Silent, but when she saw me lying stark,  
Dishelm'd and mute, and motionlessly pale,  
Cold ev'n to her, she sigh'd, and when she saw  
The haggard father's face and reverend beard  
Of grisly twine, all dabbled with the blood  
Of his own son, shudder'd, a twitch of pain  
Tortured her mouth, and o'er her forehead past  
A shadow, and her hue changed, and she said  
' He saved my life my brother slew him for it.'  
No more. at which the king in bitter scorn  
Drew from my neck the panting and the tress,  
And held them up she saw them, and a day  
Rose from the distance on her memory,  
When the good Queen, her mother, shone the tress  
With kisses, ere the days of Lady Blanche  
And then once more she look'd at my pale face ;

Till understanding all the foolish work  
Of Fancy, and the bitter close of all,  
Her iron will was broken in her mind ,  
Her noble heart was molten in her breast ;  
She bow'd, she set the child on the earth , she laid  
A feeling finger on my brows, and presently  
'O Sire,' she said, 'he lives . he is not dead .  
O let me have him with my brethren here  
In our own palace . we will tend on him  
Like one of these , if so, by any means,  
To lighten this great clog of thanks, that make  
Our progress falter to the woman's goal '

She said but at the happy word 'he lives'  
My father stoop'd, re-father'd o'er my wounds.  
So those two foes above my fallen life,  
With brow to brow like night and evening mixt  
Their dark and gray, while Psyche ever stole  
A little nearer, till the babe that by us,  
Half-lapt in glowing gauze and golden brede,  
Lay like a new-fall'n meteor on the grass,  
Uncares for, spied its mother and began  
A blind and babbling laughter, and to dance  
Its body, and reach its fatling innocent arms  
And lazy lingering fingers. She the appeal  
Brook'd not, but clamouring out 'Mine—mine—not  
yours,

It is not yours, but mine give me the child '  
Ceased all on tremble piteous was the cry  
So stood the unhappy mother open-mouth'd,  
And turn'd each face her way wan was her cheek  
With hollow watch, her blooming mantle torn,  
Red grief and mother's hunger in her eye,  
And down dead-heavy sank her curls, and half  
The sacred mother's bosom, panting, burst  
The laces toward her babe, but she not cared  
Nor knew it, clamouring on, till Ida heard,  
Look'd up, and rising slowly from me, stood  
Erect and silent, striking with her glance  
The mother, me, the child, but he that lay  
Beside us, Cyril, batter'd as he was,  
Trail'd himself up on one knee then he drew  
Her robe to meet his lips, and down she look'd  
At the arm'd man sideways, pitying as it seem'd,  
Or self-involved; but when she learnt his face,  
Remembering his ill-omen'd song, arose  
Once more thro' all her height, and o'er him grew  
Tall as a figure lengthen'd on the sand  
When the tide ebbs in sunshine, and he said

'O fair and strong and terrible! Lioness  
That with your long locks play the Lion's mane!  
But Love and Nature, these are two more terrible  
And stronger See, your foot is on our necks,

We vanquish'd, you the Victor of your will  
 What would you more ? give her the child ! remain  
 Orb'd in your isolation he is dead,  
 Or all as dead henceforth we let you be  
 Win you the hearts of women , and beware  
 Lest, where you seek the common love of these,  
 The common hate with the revolving wheel  
 Should drag you down, and some great Nemesis  
 Break from a darken'd future, crown'd with fire,  
 And tread you out for ever but howsoe'er  
 Fix'd in yourself, never in your own arms  
 To hold your own, deny not heirs to her,  
 Give her the child ! O if, I say, you keep  
 One pulse that beats true woman, if you loved  
 The breast that fed or arm that dandled you,  
 Or own one port of sense not flint to prayer,  
 Give her the child ! or if you scorn to lay it,  
 Yourself, in hands so lately claspt with yours,  
 Or speak to her, your dearest, her one fault  
 The tenderness, not yours, that could not kill,  
 Give *me* it I will give it her !

He said .

At first her eye with slow dilation roll'd  
 Dry flame, she listening , after sank and sank  
 And, into mournful twilight mellowing, dwelt  
 Full on the child , she took it ' Pretty bud !  
 Lily of the vale ! half open'd bell of the woods !

Sole comfort of my dark hour, when a world  
Of traitorous friend and broken system made  
No purple in the distance, mystery,  
Pledge of a love not to be mine, farewell,  
These men are laid upon us as of old,  
We two must part and yet how fair was I  
To dream thy cause embraced in mine, to think  
I might be something to thee, when I felt  
Thy helpless warmth about my barren breast  
In the dead prime but may thy mother prove  
As true to thee as false, false, false to me!  
And, if thou needs must bear the yoke, I wish it  
Gentle as freedom'—here she kiss'd it. then—  
'All good go with thee! take it Sir,' and so  
Laid the soft babe in his hard-mailed hands,  
Who turn'd half-round to Psyche as she sprang  
To meet it, with an eye that swam in thanks,  
Then felt it sound and whole from head to foot,  
And hugg'd and never hugg'd it close enough,  
And in her hunger mouth'd and mumbled it,  
And hid her bosom with it, after that  
Put on more calm and added suppliantly

'We two were friends I go to mine own land  
For ever find some other as for me  
I scarce am fit for your great plans yet speak to me,  
Say one soft word and let me part forgiven'



But Ida spoke not, iapt upon the child  
Then Arac 'Ida—'sdeath ! you blame the man ,  
You wrong yourselves—the woman is so hard  
Upon the woman Come, a grace to me !  
I am your warrior I and mine have fought  
Your battle kiss her , take her hand, she weeps  
'Sdeath ! I would sooner fight thrice o'er than see it '

But Ida spoke not, gazing on the ground,  
And reddening in the furrows of his chin,  
And moved beyond his custom, Gama said

'I've heard that there is iron in the blood,  
And I believe it Not one word ? not one ?  
Whence drew you this steel temper ? not from me,  
Not from your mother, now a saint with saints  
She said you had a heart—I heard her say it—  
“Our Ida has a heart”—just ere she died—  
“But see that some one with authority  
Be near her still” and I—I sought for one—  
All people said she had authority—  
The Lady Blanche much profit ! Not one word ,  
No ! tho' your father sues · see how you stand  
Stiff as Lot's wife, and all the good knights maim'd,  
I trust that there is no one hurt to death,  
For your wild whim and was it then for this,  
Was it for this we gave our palace up,

Where we withdrew from summer heats and state,  
And had our wine and chess beneath the planes,  
And many a pleasant hour with her that's gone,  
Ere you were born to vex us? Is it kind?  
Speak to her I say is this not she of whom,  
When first she came, all flush'd you said to me  
Now had you got a friend of your own age,  
Now could you share your thought, now should men see  
Two women faster welded in one love  
Than pairs of wedlock, she you walk'd with, she  
You talk'd with, whole nights long, up in the tower,  
Of sine and arc, spheroid and azimuth,  
And night ascension, Heaven knows what, and now  
A word, but one, one little kindly word,  
Not one to spare her out upon you, flint!  
You love nor her, nor me, nor any, nay,  
You shame your mother's judgment too Not one?  
You will not? well—no heart have you, or such  
As fancies like the vermin in a nut  
Have fretted all to dust and bitterness'  
So said the small king moved beyond his wont

But Ida stood nor spoke, drain'd of her force  
By many a varying influence and so long  
Down thro' her limbs a drooping languor wept  
Her head a little bent, and on her mouth  
A doubtful smile dwelt like a clouded moon

In a still water then brake out my sire,  
 Lifting his gum head from my wounds 'O you,  
 Woman, whom we thought woman even now,  
 And were half fool'd to let you tend our son,  
 Because he might have wish'd it—but we see  
 The accomplice of your madness unforgiven,  
 And think that you might mix his draught with death,  
 When your skies change again the rougher hand  
 Is safer on to the tents take up the Prince'

He rose, and while each ear was prick'd to attend  
 A tempest, thro' the cloud that dimm'd her broke  
 A genial warmth and light once more, and shone  
 Thro' glittering drops on her sad friend

'Come hither

O Psyche,' she cried out, 'embrace me, come,  
 Quick while I melt, make reconcilment sure  
 With one that cannot keep her mind an hour  
 Come to the hollow heart they slander so!  
 Kiss and be friends, like children being chid!  
 I seem no more I want forgiveness too  
 I should have had to do with none but mards,  
 That have no links with men Ah false but dear,  
 Dear traitor, too much loved, why?—why?—Yet see,  
 Before these kings we embrace you yet once more  
 With all forgiveness, all oblivion,  
 And trust, not love, you less

And now, O sire,  
 Giant me your son, to nurse, to wait upon him,  
 Like mine own brother For my debt to him,  
 This nightmare weight of gratitude, I know it,  
 Taunt me no more yourself and yours shall have  
 Free adit, we will scatter all our maids  
 Till happier times each to her proper hearth  
 What use to keep them here—now? grant my prayer  
 Help, father, brother, help, speak to the king  
 Thaw this male nature to some touch of that  
 Which kills me with myself, and drags me down  
 From my fixt height to mob me up with all  
 The soft and milky rabble of womankind,  
 Poor weakling ev'n as they are'

Passionate tears

Follow'd the king replied not Cyril said  
 'Your brother, Lady,—Florian,—ask for him  
 Of your great head—for he is wounded too—  
 That you may tend upon him with the prince'  
 'Ay so,' said Ida with a bitter smile,  
 'Our laws are broken. let him enter too'  
 Then Violet, she that sang the mournful song,  
 And had a cousin tumbled on the plain,  
 Petition'd too for him 'Ay so,' she said,  
 'I stagger in the stream I cannot keep  
 My heart an eddy from the bawling hour.  
 We break our laws with ease, but let it be.'

‘Ay so?’ said Blanche ‘Amazed am I to hear  
Your Highness but your Highness breaks with ease  
The law your Highness did not make ’twas I  
I had been wedded wife, I knew mankind,  
And block’d them out, but these men came to woo  
Your Highness—verily I think to win’

So she, and turn’d askance a wintry eye  
But Ida with a voice, that like a bell  
Toll’d by an earthquake in a trembling tower,  
Rang ruin, answer’d full of grief and scorn

‘Fling our doors wide ! all, all, not one, but all,  
Not only he, but by my mother’s soul,  
Whatever man lies wounded, friend or foe,  
Shall enter, if he will Let our girls flit,  
Till the storm die ! but had you stood by us,  
The roar that breaks the Pharos from his base  
Had left us rock She fain would sting us too,  
But shall not Pass, and mingle with your likes  
We brook no further insult but are gone’

She turn’d ; the very nape of her white neck  
Was rosed with indignation but the Prince  
Her brother came , the king her father charm’d  
Her wounded soul with words nor did mine own  
Refuse her proffer, lastly gave his hand

Then us they lifted up, dead weights, and bare  
Straight to the doors • to them the doors gave way  
Groaning, and in the Vestal entry shriek'd  
The virgin marble under iron heels  
And on they moved and gain'd the hall, and there  
Rested but great the crush was, and each base,  
To left and right, of those tall columns down'd  
In silken fluctuation and the swarm  
Of female whisperers at the further end  
Was Ida by the throne, the two great cats  
Close by her, like supporters on a shield,  
Bow-back'd with fear but in the centre stood  
The common men with rolling eyes, amazed  
They glared upon the women, and aghast  
The women stared at these, all silent, save  
When armour clash'd or jingled, while the day,  
Descending, struck athwart the hall, and shot  
A flying splendour out of brass and steel  
That o'er the statues leapt from head to head,  
Now fired an angry Pallas on the helm,  
Now set a wrathful Dian's moon on flame,  
And now and then an echo started up,  
And shuddering fled from room to room, and died  
Of fight in far apartments

Then the voice

Of Ida sounded, issuing ordinance  
And me they bore up the broad stairs, and thro'

The long laid galleries past a hundred doors  
To one deep chamber shut from sound, and due  
To languid limbs and sickness, left me in it,  
And others otherwhere they laid, and all  
That afternoon a sound arose of hoof  
And chariot, many a maiden passing home  
Till happier times, but some were left of those  
Held sagest, and the great lords out and in,  
From those two hosts that lay beside the walls,  
Walk'd at their will, and everything was changed





Ask me no more the moon may draw the sea ,  
The cloud may stoop from heaven and take the shape  
With fold to fold, of mountain or of cape ,  
But O too fond, when have I answer'd thee ?  
Ask me no more

Ask me no more what answer should I give ?  
I love not hollow cheek or faded eye  
Yet, O my friend, I will not have thee die '  
Ask me no more, lest I should bid thee live ,  
Ask me no more.

Ask me no more thy fate and mine are seal'd  
I strove against the stream and all in vain  
Let the great river take me to the main  
No more, dear love, for at a touch I yield ,  
Ask me no more



## VII

So was their sanctuary violated,  
So then fair college turn'd to hospital ,  
At first with all confusion by and by  
Sweet order lived again with other laws  
A kindlier influence reign'd , and everywhere  
Low voices with the ministering hand  
Hung round the sick the maidens came, they talk'd  
They sang, they read till she not fair began  
To gather light, and she that was, became  
Her former beauty treble , and to and fro  
With books, with flowers, with Angel offices,  
Like creatures native unto gracious act,  
And in their own clear element, they moved

But sadness on the soul of Ida fell,  
And hatred of her weakness, blent with shame  
Old studies fail'd , seldom she spoke but oft  
Clomb to the roofs, and gazed alone for hours  
On that disastrous leaguer, swarms of men  
Darkening her female field void was her use,

And she as one that climbs a peak to gaze  
O'er land and main, and sees a great black cloud  
Drag inward from the deeps, a wall of night,  
Blot out the slope of sea from verge to shore,  
And suck the blinding splendour from the sand,  
And quenching lake by lake and tarn by tarn  
Expunge the world so fared she gazing there,  
So blacken'd all her world in secret, blank  
And waste it seem'd and vain, till down she came,  
And found fair peace once more among the sick

And twilight dawn'd; and morn by morn the lark  
Shot up and shull'd in flickering gyres, but I  
Lay silent in the muffled cage of life  
And twilight gloom'd; and broader-grown the bowers  
Drew the great night into themselves, and Heaven,  
Staid after staid, arose and fell, but I,  
Deeper than those weird doubts could reach me, lay  
Quite sunder'd from the moving Universe,  
Nor knew what eye was on me, nor the hand  
That nursed me, more than infants in their sleep

But Psyche tended Florian with her oft,  
Melissa came, for Blanche had gone, but left  
Her child among us, willing she should keep  
Court-favour here and there the small bright head,  
A light of healing, glanced about the couch,

On thro' the parted silks the tender face  
Peep'd, shining in upon the wounded man  
With blush and smile, a medicine in themselves  
To wile the length from languorous hours, and draw  
The sting from pain, nor seem'd it strange that soon  
He rose up whole, and those fair charities  
Join'd at her side, nor stranger seem'd that hearts  
So gentle, so employ'd, should close in love,  
Than when two dewdrops on the petal shake  
To the same sweet air, and tremble deeper down,  
And slip at once all-fragrant into one

Less prosperously the second suit obtain'd  
At first with Psyche Not tho' Blanche had sworn  
That after that dark night among the fields  
She needs must wed him for her own good name,  
Not tho' he built upon the babe restored,  
Nor tho' she liked him, yielded she, but fear'd  
To incense the Head once more, till on a day  
When Cyul pleaded, Ida came behind  
Seen but of Psyche on her foot she hung  
A moment, and she heard, at which her face  
A little flush'd, and she past on, but each  
Assumed from thence a half-consent involved  
In stillness, plighted troth, and were at peace

Nor only these. Love in the sacred halls

Held carnival at will, and flying struck  
With showers of random sweet on maid and man  
Nor did her father cease to press my claim,  
Nor did mine own, now reconciled , nor yet  
Did those twin-brothers, risen again and whole ,  
Nor Arac, satiate with his victory

But I lay still, and with me oft she sat  
Then came a change , for sometimes I would catch  
Her hand in wild delirium, gripe it hard,  
And fling it like a viper off, and shriek  
'You are not Ida ,' clasp it once again,  
And call her Ida, tho' I knew her not,  
And call her sweet, as if in irony,  
And call her hard and cold which seem'd a truth  
And still she fear'd that I should lose my mind,  
And often she believed that I should die  
Till out of long frustration of her care,  
And pensive tendance in the all-weary noons,  
And watches in the dead, the dark, when clocks  
Throbb'd thunder thro' the palace floois, or call'd  
On flying Time from all their silver tongues—  
And out of memories of her kinder days,  
And sidelong glances at my father's grief,  
And at the happy lovers heart in heart—  
And out of hauntings of my spoken love,  
And lonely listenings to my mutter'd dream,

And often feeling of the helpless hands,  
And wordless broodings on the wasted cheek—  
From all a closer interest flourish'd up,  
Tenderness touch by touch, and last, to these,  
Love, like an Alpine harebell hung with tears  
By some cold morning glacier, frail at first  
And feeble, all unconscious of itself,  
But such as gather'd colour day by day

Last I woke sane, but well-nigh close to death  
For weakness it was evening silent light  
Slept on the painted walls, wherein were wrought  
Two grand designs, for on one side arose  
The women up in wild revolt, and storm'd  
At the Oppian law. Titanic shapes, they cramm'd  
The forum, and half-crush'd among the rest  
A dwarf-like Cato cower'd On the other side  
Hortensia spoke against the tax, behind,  
A train of dames by axe and eagle sat,  
With all their foreheads drawn in Roman scowls,  
And half the wolf's-milk curdled in their veins,  
The fierce triumvirs, and before them paused  
Hortensia pleading angry was her face

I saw the forms I knew not where I was  
They did but look like hollow shows, nor more  
Sweet Ida. palm to palm she sat the dew

Dwelt in her eyes, and softer all her shape  
And rounder seem'd I moved I sigh'd a touch  
Came round my wrist, and tears upon my hand  
Then all for languor and self-pity ran  
Mine down my face, and with what life I had,  
And like a flower that cannot all unfold,  
So diench'd it is with tempest, to the sun,  
Yet, as it may, turns toward him, I on her  
Fixt my faint eyes, and utter'd whisperingly

‘If you be, what I think you, some sweet dream,  
I would but ask you to fulfil yourself  
But if you be that Ida whom I knew,  
I ask you nothing only, if a dream,  
Sweet dream, be perfect I shall die to-night  
Stoop down and seem to kiss me ere I die’

I could no more, but lay like one in trance,  
That hears his burial talk'd of by his friends,  
And cannot speak, nor move, nor make one sign,  
But lies and dreads his doom. She turn'd, she  
    paused ;  
She stoop'd, and out of languor leapt a cry,  
Leapt fiery Passion from the bunks of death,  
And I believed that in the living world  
My spirit closed with Ida's at the lips,  
Till back I fell, and from mine arms she rose



Glowing all over noble shame , and all  
Her falser self slipt from her like a robe,  
And left her woman, lovelier in her mood  
Than in her mould that other, when she came  
From barren deeps to conquer all with love ,  
And down the streaming crystal dropt , and she  
Far-fleeted by the purple island-sides,  
Naked, a double light in air and wave,  
To meet her Graces, where they deck'd her out  
For worship without end , nor end of mine,  
Statehest, for thee ! but mute she glided forth,  
Nor glanced behind her, and I sank and slept,  
Fill'd thro' and thro' with Love, a happy sleep

Deep in the night I woke she, near me, held  
A volume of the Poets of her land  
There to herself, all in low tones, she read

‘ Now sleeps the crimson petal, now the white ,  
Nor waves the cypress in the palace walk ,  
Nor winks the gold fin in the porphyry font  
The fire-fly wakens waken thou with me

Now droops the milkwhite peacock like a ghost,  
And like a ghost she glimmers on to me

Now lies the Earth all Danae to the stars,  
And all thy heart lies open unto me

Now slides the silent meteor on, and leaves  
A shining furrow, as thy thoughts in me

Now folds the lily all her sweetness up,  
And slips into the bosom of the lake  
So fold thyself, my dearest, thou, and slip  
Into my bosom and be lost in me '

I heard her turn the page , she found a small  
Sweet Idyl, and once more, as low, she read

' Come down, O maid, from yonder mountain height  
What pleasure lives in height (the shepherd sang)  
In height and cold, the splendour of the hills?  
But cease to move so near the Heavens, and cease  
To glide a sunbeam by the blasted Pine,  
To sit a star upon the sparkling spire ,  
And come, for Love is of the valley, come,  
For Love is of the valley, come thou down  
And find him , by the happy threshold, he,  
Or hand in hand with Plenty in the maize,  
Or red with spured purple of the vats,  
Or foxlike in the vine , nor cares to walk  
With Death and Morning on the silver horns,  
Nor wilt thou snare him in the white ravine,  
Nor find him dropt upon the firths of ice,  
That huddling slant in furrow-cloven falls  
To roll the torrent out of dusky doors  
But follow ; let the torrent dance thee down  
To find him in the valley , let the wild  
Lean-headed Eagles yelp alone, and leave  
The monstrous ledges there to slope, and spill  
Then thousand wreaths of dangling water smoke,  
That like a broken purpose waste in air  
So waste not thou , but come , for all the vales  
Await thee , azure pillars of the heath  
Arise to thee , the children call, and I  
Thy shepherd pipe, and sweet is every sound,

Sweeter thy voice, but every sound is sweet,  
Myriads of rivulets hurrying thro' the lawn,  
The moan of doves in immemorial elms,  
And murmuring of innumerable bees '

So she low-toned, while with shut eyes I lay  
Listening, then look'd    Pale was the perfect face,  
The bosom with long sighs labour'd, and meek  
Seem'd the full lips, and mild the luminous eyes,  
And the voice trembled and the hand    She said  
Brokenly, that she knew it, she had fail'd  
In sweet humility, had fail'd in all,  
That all her labour was but as a block  
Left in the quarry, but she still were loth,  
She still were loth to yield herself to one  
That wholly scorn'd to help their equal rights  
Against the sons of men, and barbarous laws  
She pray'd me not to judge then cause from her  
That wrong'd it, sought far less for truth than power  
In knowledge    something wild within her breast,  
A greater than all knowledge, beat her down  
And she had nursed me there from week to week  
Much had she learnt in little time    In part  
It was ill counsel had misled the girl  
To vex true hearts    yet was she but a girl—  
'Ah fool, and made myself a Queen of farce'  
When comes another such? never, I think,  
Till the Sun drop, dead, from the signs'

Her voice

Choked, and her forehead sank upon her hands,  
 And her great heart thro' all the faultful Past  
 Went sorrowing in a pause I dared not break,  
 Till notice of a change in the dark world  
 Was lispt about the acacias, and a bird,  
 That early woke to feed her little ones,  
 Sent from a dewy breast a cry for light  
 She moved, and at her feet the volume fell

‘Blame not thyself too much,’ I said, ‘nor blame  
 Too much the sons of men and barbarous laws,  
 These were the rough ways of the world till now  
 Henceforth thou hast a helper, me, that know  
The woman’s cause is man’s they rise or sink  
 Together, dwarf’d or godlike, bond or free.  
 For she that out of Lethe scales with man  
 The shining steps of Nature, shares with man  
 His nights, his days, moves with him to one goal,  
 Stays all the fair young planet in her hands—  
 If she be small, slight-natured, miserable,  
 How shall men grow? but work no more alone!  
 Our place is much as far as in us lies  
 We two will serve them both in aiding her—  
 Will clear away the parasitic forms  
 That seem to keep her up but drag her down—  
 Will leave her space to burgeon out of all

Within her—let her make herself her own  
To give or keep, to live and learn and be  
All that not harms distinctive womanhood  
For woman is not undeveloped man,  
But diverse could we make her as the man,  
Sweet Love were slain his dearest bond is this,  
Not like to like, but like in difference  
Yet in the long years liker must they grow,  
The man be more of woman, she of man,  
He gain in sweetness and in moral height,  
Nor lose the wrestling thews that throw the world,  
She mental breadth, nor fail in childward care,  
Nor lose the childlike in the larger mind,  
Till at the last she set herself to man,  
Like perfect music unto noble words,  
And so these twain, upon the skirts of Time,  
Sit side by side, full-summ'd in all their powers,  
Dispensing harvest, sowing the To-be,  
Self-reverent each and reverencing each,  
Distinct in individualities,  
But like each other ev'n as those who love  
Then comes the statelier Eden back to men  
Then reign the world's great bridals, chaste and calm  
Then springs the crowning race of humankind  
May these things be !'

Sighing she spoke 'I fear

They will not '

‘ Dear, but let us type them now  
In our own lives, and this proud watchword rest  
Of equal , seeing either sex alone  
Is half itself, and in true marriage lies  
Nor equal, nor unequal each fulfils  
Defect in each, and always thought in thought,  
Purpose in purpose, will in will, they grow,  
The single pure and perfect animal,  
The two-cell’d heart beating, with one full stroke,  
Life ’

And again sighing she spoke ‘ A dream  
That once was mine ’ what woman taught you this ?’

‘ Alone,’ I said, ‘ from earlier than I know,  
Immersed in rich foreshadowings of the world,  
I loved the woman he, that doth not, lives  
A drowning life, besotted in sweet self,  
Or pines in sad experience worse than death,  
Or keeps his wing’d affections clipt with crime  
Yet was there one thro’ whom I loved her, one  
Not learned, save in gracious household ways,  
Not perfect, nay, but full of tender wants,  
No Angel, but a dearer being, all dipt  
In Angel instincts, breathing Paradise,  
Interpreter between the Gods and men,  
Who look’d all native to her place, and yet  
On tiptoe seem’d to touch upon a sphere

Too gross to tread, and all male minds perforce  
Sway'd to her from their orbits as they moved,  
And guddled her with music    Happy he  
With such a mother's faith in womankind  
Beats with his blood, and trust in all things high  
Comes easy to him, and tho' he trip and fall  
He shall not blind his soul with clay'

‘But I,’

Said Ida, tremulously, ‘so all unlike—  
It seems you love to cheat yourself with words  
This mother is your model    I have heard  
Of your strange doubts    they well might be    I seem  
A mockery to my own self    Never, Prince,  
You cannot love me’

‘Nay but thee’ I said

‘From yearlong poring on thy pictured eyes,  
Ere seen I loved, and loved thee seen, and saw  
Thee woman thro’ the crust of iron moods  
That mask’d thee from men’s reverence up, and forced  
Sweet love on pranks of saucy boyhood    now,  
Giv’n back to life, to life indeed, thro’ thee,  
Indeed I love    the new day comes, the light  
Dearer for night, as dearer thou for faults  
Lived over    lift thine eyes, my doubts are dead,  
My haunting sense of hollow shows    the change,  
This truthful change in thee has kill’d it    Dear,  
Look up, and let thy nature strike on mine,

Like yonder morning on the blind half-world,  
Approach and fear not, breathe upon my brows,  
In that fine air I tremble, all the past  
Melts mist-like into this bright hour, and this  
Is morn to more, and all the rich to-come  
Reels, as the golden Autumn woodland reels  
Athwart the smoke of burning weeds    Forgive me,  
I waste my heart in signs · let be    My bride,  
My wife, my life    O we will walk this world,  
Yoked in all exercise of noble end,  
And so thro' those dark gates across the wild  
That no man knows    Indeed I love thee    come,  
Yield thyself up    my hopes and thine are one.  
Accomplish thou my manhood and thyself,  
Lay thy sweet hands in mine and trust to me '



## CONCLUSION.

So closed our tale, of which I give you all  
The random scheme as wildly as it rose  
The words are mostly mine , for when we ceased  
There came a minute's pause, and Walter said,  
'I wish she had not yielded ' then to me,  
'What, if you drest it up poetically '  
So pray'd the men, the women I gave assent  
Yet how to bind the scatter'd scheme of seven  
Together in one sheaf? What style could suit ?  
The men required that I should give throughout  
The sort of mock-heroic gigantesque,  
With which we banter'd little Lilia first  
The women—and perhaps they felt their power,  
For something in the ballads which they sang,  
Or in their silent influence as they sat,  
Had ever seem'd to wrestle with burlesque,  
And drove us, last, to quite a solemn close—  
They hated banter, wish'd for something real,  
A gallant fight, a noble princess—why  
Not make her true-heroic—true-sublime ?

Or all, they said, as earnest as the close ?  
Which yet with such a framework scarce could be  
Then rose a little feud betwixt the two,  
Betwixt the mockers and the realists .  
And I, betwixt them both, to please them both,  
And yet to give the story as it rose,  
I moved as in a strange diagonal,  
And maybe neither pleased myself nor them.

But Lilia pleased me, for she took no part  
In our dispute . the sequel of the tale  
Had touch'd her , and she sat, she pluck'd the grass,  
She flung it from her, thinking . last, she fixt  
A showery glance upon her aunt, and said,  
' You—tell us what we are ' who might have told,  
For she was cramm'd with theories out of books,  
But that there rose a shout the gates were closed  
At sunset, and the crowd were swarming now,  
To take then leave, about the garden rails

So I and some went out to these we climb'd  
The slope to Vivian-place, and turning saw  
The happy valleys, half in light, and half  
Far-shadowing from the west, a land of peace ,  
Gray halls alone among their massive groves ,  
Tum hamlets , here and there a rustic tower  
Half-lost in belts of hop and breadths of wheat ,

The shimmering glimpses of a stream , the seas ,  
A red sail, or a white , and far beyond,  
Imagined more than seen, the skuts of France

‘ Look there, a garden ! ’ said my college friend,  
The Tory member’s elder son, ‘ and there !  
God bless the narrow sea which keeps her off,  
And keeps our Britain, whole within herself,  
A nation yet, the rulers and the ruled—  
Some sense of duty, something of a faith,  
Some reverence for the laws ourselves have made,  
Some patient force to change them when we will,  
Some civic manhood firm against the crowd—  
But yonder, whiff ! there comes a sudden heat,  
The gravest citizen seems to lose his head,  
The king is scared, the soldier will not fight,  
The little boys begin to shoot and stab,  
A kingdom topples over with a shriek  
Like an old woman, and down rolls the world  
In mock heroics stranger than our own ,  
Revolts, republics, revolutions, most  
No graver than a schoolboys’ bawling out ,  
Too comic for the solemn things they are,  
Too solemn for the comic touches in them,  
Like our wild Princess with as wise a dream  
As some of theirs—God bless the narrow seas !  
I wish they were a whole Atlantic broad ’

‘Have patience,’ I replied, ‘ourselves are full  
Of social wrong, and maybe wildest dreams  
Are but the needful preludes of the truth  
For me, the genial day, the happy crowd,  
The sport half-science, fill me with a faith  
This fine old world of ours is but a child  
Yet in the go-cart    Patience !    Give it time  
To learn its limbs    there is a hand that guides ’

In such discourse we gain’d the garden rails,  
And there we saw Sir Walter where he stood,  
Before a tower of crimson holly-hoaks,  
Among six boys, head under head, and look’d  
No little lily-handed Baronet he,  
A great broad-shoulder’d genial Englishman,  
A lord of fat prize-oxen and of sheep,  
A raiser of huge melons and of pine,  
A patron of some thirty charities,  
A pamphleteer on guano and on grain,  
A quarter-sessions chairman, able none,  
Fau-han’d and redder than a windy morn,  
Now shaking hands with him, now him, of those  
That stood the nearest—now address’d to speech—  
Who spoke few words and pithy, such as closed  
Welcome, farewell, and welcome for the year  
To follow · a shout rose again, and made  
The long line of the approaching rookery swerve

From the elms, and shook the branches of the deer  
From slope to slope thro' distant ferns, and rang  
Beyond the bourn of sunset, O, a shout  
More joyful than the city-joar that hails  
Premier or king! Why should not these great Sirs  
Give up their parks some dozen times a year  
To let the people breathe? So thrice they cried,  
I likewise, and in groups they stream'd away

But we went back to the Abbey, and sat on,  
So much the gathering darkness charm'd we sat  
But spoke not, rapt in nameless reverie,  
Perchance upon the future man the walls  
Blacken'd about us, bats wheel'd, and owls whoop'd,  
And gradually the powers of the night,  
That range above the region of the wind,  
Deepening the courts of twilight broke them up  
Thro' all the silent spaces of the worlds,  
Beyond all thought into the Heaven of Heavens

Last little Lilia, rising quietly,  
Disrobed the glimmering statue of Sir Ralph  
From those rich silks, and home well-pleased we went



# MAUD, A MONODRAMA

## PART I

### I

### I

I HATE the dreadful hollow behind the little wood,  
Its lips in the field above are dabbled with blood-red  
    heath,  
The red ribb'd ledges dip with a silent horror of  
    blood,  
And Echo there, whatever is ask'd her, answers  
    'Death'

### II

For there in the ghastly pit long since a body was  
    found,  
His who had given me life—O father! O God! was  
    it well?—  
Mangled, and flatten'd, and crush'd, and dinted into  
    the ground  
There yet lies the rock that fell with him when he fell

## III

Did he fling himself down? who knows? for a vast  
speculation had fail'd,  
And ever he mutter'd and madden'd, and ever wann'd  
with despair,  
And out he walk'd when the wind like a broken  
worldling wail'd,  
And the flying gold of the ruin'd woodlands drove  
thio' the air

## IV

I remember the time, for the roots of my hair were  
stirr'd  
By a shuffled step, by a dead weight trail'd, by a  
whisper'd fright,  
And my pulses closed their gates with a shock on my  
heart as I heard  
The shrill-edged shriek of a mother divide the shudder  
ing night

## V.

Villany somewhere! whose? One says, we are  
villains all  
Not he his honest fame should at least by me be  
maintained



But that old man, now lord of the broad estate and  
the Hall,  
Dropt off gorged from a scheme that had left us flaccid  
and diain'd

## VI

Why do they prate of the blessings of Peace? we have  
made them a curse,  
Pickpockets, each hand lusting for all that is not its own,  
And lust of gain, in the spirit of Cain, is it better or  
wise  
Than the heart of the citizen hissing in war on his  
own hearthstone?

## VII

But these are the days of advance, the works of the  
men of mind,  
When who but a fool would have faith in a trades  
man's ware or his word?  
Is it peace or war? Civil war, as I think, and that of  
a kind  
The viler, as underhand, not openly bearing the sword.

## VIII

Sooner or later I too may passively take the print  
Of the golden age—why not? I have neither hope  
nor trust,

May make my heart as a millstone, set my face as a  
flint,  
Cheat and be cheated, and die who knows ? we are  
ashes and dust

## IX

Peace sitting under her olive, and slurring the days  
gone by,  
When the poor are hovell'd and hustled together, each  
sex, like swine,  
When only the ledger lives, and when only not all  
men lie ,  
Peace in her vineyard—yes !—but a company forges  
the wine

## X

And the vitriol madness flushes up in the ruffian's  
head,  
Till the filthy by-lane rings to the yell of the trampled  
wife,  
And chalk and alum and plaster are sold to the poor  
for bread,  
And the spirit of murder works in the very means of  
life,

## XI

And Sleep must lie down arm'd, for the villainous  
centre-bits

Grind on the wakeful ear in the hush of the moonless  
nights,  
While another is cheating the sick of a few last gasps,  
as he sits  
To pestle a poison'd poison behind his crimson lights

## XII

When a Mammonite mother kills her babe for a burial  
fee,  
And Timour-Mammon grins on a pile of children's  
bones,  
Is it peace or war? better, war! loud war by land and  
by sea,  
War with a thousand battles, and shaking a hundred  
thrones

## XIII

For I trust if an enemy's fleet came yonder round by  
the hill,  
And the rushing battle-bolt sang from the three-decker  
out of the foam,  
That the smooth-faced snubnosed rogue would leap  
from his counter and till,  
And strike, if he could, were it but with his cheating  
yardwand, home —

## XIV

What ! am I raging alone as my father raged in his  
mood ?  
Must I too creep to the hollow and dash myself down  
and die  
Rather than hold by the law that I made, nevermore  
to brood  
On a horror of shatter'd limbs and a wretched swindler's  
lie ?

## XV.

Would there be sorrow for *me* ? there was *love* in the  
passionate shriek,  
Love for the silent thing that had made false haste to  
the grave—  
Wrapt in a cloak, as I saw him, and thought he would  
rise and speak  
And rave at the lie and the liar, ah God, as he used  
to rave

## XVI

I am sick of the Hall and the hill, I am sick of the  
moor and the main  
Why should I stay ? can a sweeter chance ever come  
to me here ?

O, having the nerves of motion as well as the nerves  
of pain,  
Were it not wise if I fled from the place and the pit  
and the fear?

## XVII

Workmen up at the Hall !—they are coming back from  
abroad,  
The dark old place will be gilt by the touch of a  
millionaire  
I have heard, I know not whence, of the singular  
beauty of Maud,  
I play'd with the girl when a child, she promised then  
to be fair

## XVIII

Maud with her venturous climbings and tumbles and  
childish escapes,  
Maud the delight of the village, the ringing joy of the  
Hall,  
Maud with her sweet purse-mouth when my father  
dangled the grapes,  
Maud the beloved of my mother, the moon-faced  
darling of all,—

## XIX

What is she now? My dreams are bad She may  
bring me a curse

No, there is fatter game on the moor, she will let me  
alone

Thanks, for the fiend best knows whether woman or  
man be the wiser

I will bury myself in myself, and the Devil may pipe  
to his own

## II

Long have I sigh'd for a calm    God grant I may find  
it at last !

It will never be broken by Maud, she has neither  
savour nor salt,

But a cold and clear-cut face, as I found when her  
carriage past,

Perfectly beautiful    let it be granted her    where is  
the fault ?

All that I saw (for her eyes were downcast, not to be  
seen)

Faultily faultless, icy regular, splendidly null,

Dead perfection, no more, nothing more, if it had  
not been

For a chance of travel, a paleness, an hour's defect of  
the rose,

Or an underlip, you may call it a little too ripe, too full,

Or the least little delicate aquiline curve in a sensitive  
nose,

From which I escaped heart-free, with the least little  
touch of spleen

## III

Cold and clear-cut face, why come you so cruelly  
meek,  
Breaking a slumber in which all spleenful folly was  
drown'd,  
Pale with the golden beam of an eyelash dead on the  
cheek,  
Passionless, pale, cold face, star-sweet on a gloom  
profound,  
Womanlike, taking revenge too deep for a transient  
wrong  
Done but in thought to your beauty, and ever as pale  
as before  
Growing and fading and growing upon me without a  
sound,  
Luminous, gemlike, ghostlike, deathlike, half the  
night long  
Growing and fading and growing, till I could bear it  
no more,  
But arose, and all by myself in my own dark garden  
ground,



Listening now to the tide in its broad-flung ship-  
wrecking roar,  
Now to the scream of a madden'd beach dragg'd  
down by the wave,  
Walk'd in a wintry wind by a ghastly glimmer, and  
found  
The shining daffodil dead, and Orion low in his grave

## IV

## I

A million emeralds break from the ruby-budded lime  
In the little grove where I sit—ah, wherefore cannot  
I be  
Like things of the season gay, like the bountiful  
season bland,  
When the far-off sail is blown by the breeze of a softer  
clime,  
Half-lost in the liquid azure bloom of a crescent of  
sea,  
The silent sapphire-spangled marriage ring of the  
land?

## II

Below me, there, is the village, and looks how quiet  
and small !  
And yet bubbles o'er like a city, with gossip, scandal,  
and spite ,  
And Jack on his ale-house bench has as many lies as  
a Czar ,

And here on the landward side, by a red rock,  
glimmers the Hall,  
And up in the high Hall-garden I see her pass like a  
light,  
But sorrow seize me if ever that light be my leading  
star!

## III

When have I bow'd to her father, the wrinkled head  
of the race?  
I met her to-day with her brother, but not to her  
brother I bow'd  
I bow'd to his lady-sister as she rode by on the  
mooi,  
But the fire of a foolish pride flash'd over her beautiful  
face  
O child, you wrong your beauty, believe it, in being  
so proud,  
Your father has wealth well-gotten, and I am nameless  
and poor

## IV

I keep but a man and a maid, ever ready to slander  
and steal,  
I know it, and smile a hard set smile, like a stoic, or  
like  
A wiser epicurean, and let the world have its way

For nature is one with rapine, a harm no preacher  
can heal,  
The Mayfly is torn by the swallow, the sparrow spear'd  
by the shrike,  
And the whole little wood where I sit is a world of  
plunder and prey.

## v

We are puppets, Man in his pride, and Beauty fan in  
her flower,  
Do we move ourselves, or are moved by an unseen  
hand at a game  
That pushes us off from the board, and others ever  
succeed?  
Ahyet, we cannot be kind to each other here for an hour,  
We whisper, and hint, and chuckle, and grin at a  
brother's shame,  
However we brave it out, we men are a little breed

## vi

A monstrous eft was of old the Lord and Master of  
Earth,  
For him did his high sun flame, and his river billowing  
ran,  
And he felt himself in his force to be Nature's crown-  
ing race

As nine months go to the shaping an infant ripe for  
his birth,  
So many a million of ages have gone to the making of  
man  
He now is first, but is he the last? is he not too base?

## VII

The man of science himself is fonder of glory, and  
vain,  
An eye well-practised in nature, a spirit bounded and  
poor,  
The passionate heart of the poet is whirl'd into folly  
and vice  
I would not marvel at either, but keep a temperate  
brain,  
For not to desire or admire, if a man could learn it,  
were more  
Than to walk all day like the sultan of old in a garden  
of spice

## VIII

For the drift of the Maker is dark, an Isis hid by the  
veil  
Who knows the ways of the world, how God will bring  
them about?  
Our planet is one, the suns are many, the world is  
wide

Shall I weep if a Poland fall? shall I shriek if a  
Hungary fail?  
Or an infant civilisation be ruled with rod or with  
knout?  
I have not made the world, and He that made it will  
guide

## IX

Be mine a philosopher's life in the quiet woodland  
ways,  
Where if I cannot be gay let a passionless peace be  
my lot,  
Far-off from the clamour of liars belied in the hubbub  
of lies,  
From the long-neck'd geese of the world that are ever  
hissing dispraise  
Because then natures are little, and, whether he heed  
it or not,  
Where each man walks with his head in a cloud of  
poisonous flies

## X

And most of all would I flee from the cruel madness  
of love,  
The honey of poison-flowers and all the measureless ill  
Ah Maud, you milkwhite fawn, you are all unmeet for  
a wife

Your mother is mute in her grave as her image in  
marble above,

Your father is ever in London, you wander about at  
your will,

You have but fed on the roses and lain in the lilies of  
life

## V

## I

A voice by the cedar tree  
In the meadow under the Hall !  
She is singing an air that is known to me,  
A passionate ballad gallant and gay,  
A martial song like a trumpet's call !  
Singing alone in the morning of life,  
In the happy morning of life and of May,  
Singing of men that in battle array,  
Ready in heart and ready in hand,  
March with banner and bugle and fife  
To the death, for their native land

## II

Maud with her exquisite face,  
And wild voice pealing up to the sunny sky,  
And feet like sunny gems on an English green,  
Maud in the light of her youth and her grace,  
Singing of Death, and of Honour that cannot die,



Till I well could weep for a time so sordid and  
mean,  
And myself so languid and base

## III

Silence, beautiful voice !  
Be still, for you only trouble the mind  
With a joy in which I cannot rejoice,  
A glory I shall not find  
Still ! I will hear you no more,  
For your sweetness hardly leaves me a choice  
But to move to the meadow and fall before  
Her feet on the meadow grass, and adore,  
Not her, who is neither courtly nor kind,  
Not her, not her, but a voice

## VI

## I

Morning arises stormy and pale,  
No sun, but a wannish glaire  
In fold upon fold of hueless cloud,  
And the budded peaks of the wood are bow'd  
Caught and cuff'd by the gale  
I had fancied it would be fair

## II

Whom but Maud should I meet  
Last night, when the sunset burn'd  
On the blossom'd gable-ends  
At the head of the village street,  
Whom but Maud should I meet ?  
And she touch'd my hand with a smile so  
sweet,  
She made me divine amends  
For a courtesy not return'd

## III

And thus a delicate spark  
Of glowing and growing light  
Thro' the livelong hours of the dark  
Kept itself warm in the heart of my dreams,  
Ready to burst in a colour'd flame ,  
Till at last when the morning came  
In a cloud, it faded, and seems  
But an ashen-gray delight

## IV

What if with her sunny hair,  
And smile as sunny as cold,  
She meant to weave me a snare  
Of some coquettish deceit,  
Cleopatra-like as of old  
To entangle me when we met,  
To have her lion roll in a silken net  
And fawn at a victor's feet

## V

Ah, what shall I be at fifty  
Should Nature keep me alive,  
If I find the world so bitter  
When I am but twenty-five ?  
Yet, if she were not a cheat,

If Maud were all that she seem'd,  
And her smile were all that I dream'd,  
Then the world were not so bitter  
But a smile could make it sweet

## VI

What if tho' her eye seem'd full  
Of a kind intent to me,  
What if that dandy-despot, he,  
That jewell'd mass of millinery,  
That oil'd and curl'd Assyrian Bull  
Smelling of musk and of insolence,  
Her brother, from whom I keep aloof,  
Who wants the finer politic sense  
To mask, tho' but in his own behoof,  
With a glassy smile his brutal scorn—  
What if he had told her yestermorn  
How prettily for his own sweet sake  
A face of tenderness might be feign'd,  
And a moist mirage in desert eyes,  
That so, when the rotten hustings shake  
In another month to his brazen lies,  
A wretched vote may be gain'd.

## VII

For a raven ever croaks, at my side,  
Keep watch and ward, keep watch and ward,

Or thou wilt prove their tool  
Yea, too, myself from myself I guard,  
For often a man's own angry pride  
Is cap and bells for a fool.

## VIII

Perhaps the smile and tender tone  
Came out of her pitying womanhood,  
For am I not, am I not, here alone  
So many a summer since she died,  
My mother, who was so gentle and good ?  
Living alone in an empty house,  
Here half-hid in the gleaming wood,  
Where I hear the dead at midday moan,  
And the shrieking rush of the wainscot mouse,  
And my own sad name in corners cried,  
When the shiver of dancing leaves is thrown  
About its echoing chambers wide,  
Till a morbid hate and horror have grown  
Of a world in which I have hardly mixt,  
And a morbid eating lichen fixt  
On a heart half-turn'd to stone

## IX

O heart of stone, are you flesh, and caught  
By that you swore to withstand ?

For what was it else within me wrought  
But, I fear, the new strong wine of love,  
That made my tongue so stammer and tip  
When I saw the treasured splendour, her hand,  
Come sliding out of her sacred glove,  
And the sunlight broke from her lip?

## X

I have play'd with her when a child ,  
She remembers it now we meet  
Ah well, well, well, I *may* be beguiled  
By some coquettish deceit  
Yet, if she were not a cheat,  
If Maud were all that she seem'd,  
And her smile had all that I dream'd,  
Then the world were not so bitter  
But a smile could make it sweet

VII

I

Did I hear it half in a doze  
    Long since, I know not where?  
Did I dream it an hour ago,  
    When asleep in this arm-chair?

II

Men were drinking together,  
    Drinking and talking of me,  
'Well, if it prove a girl, the boy  
    Will have plenty so let it be'

III

Is it an echo of something  
    Read with a boy's delight,  
Viziers nodding together  
    In some Arabian night?

## IV

Strange, that I hear two men,  
Somewhere, talking of me ,  
‘ Well, if it prove a girl, my boy  
Will have plenty so let it be ’



## VIII

She came to the village church,  
And sat by a pillar alone,  
An angel watching an urn  
Wept over her, carved in stone,  
And once, but once, she lifted her eyes,  
And suddenly, sweetly, strangely blush'd  
To find they were met by my own,  
And suddenly, sweetly, my heart beat stronger  
And thicker, until I heard no longer  
The snowy-banded, dilettante,  
Delicate-handed priest intone,  
And thought, is it pride, and mused and sigh'd  
'No surely, now it cannot be pride'

## IX

I was walking a mile,  
More than a mile from the shore,  
The sun look'd out with a smile  
Betwixt the cloud and the moon,  
And riding at set of day  
Over the dark moor land,  
Rapidly riding far away,  
She waved to me with her hand  
There were two at her side,  
Something flash'd in the sun,  
Down by the hill I saw them ride,  
In a moment they were gone  
Like a sudden spark  
Struck vainly in the night,  
Then returns the dark  
With no more hope of light

## X

## I

Sick, am I sick of a jealous dread ?  
Was not one of the two at her side  
This new-made lord, whose splendour plucks  
The slavish hat from the villager's head ?  
Whose old grandfather has lately died,  
Gone to a blacker pit, for whom  
Grimy nakedness diagging his trucks  
And laying his trams in a poison'd gloom  
Wrought, till he crept from a gutted mine  
Master of half a servile shine,  
And left his coal all turn'd into gold  
To a grandson, first of his noble line,  
Rich in the grace all women desire,  
Strong in the power that all men adore,  
And simper and set their voices lower,  
And soften as if to a girl, and hold  
Awe-stricken breaths at a work divine,  
Seeing his gewgaw castle shine,  
New as his title, built last year,

There amid peiky larches and pine,  
And over the sullen-purple moor  
(Look at it) picking a cockney ear

## II

What, has he found my jewel out ?  
For one of the two that rode at her side  
Bound for the Hall, I am sure was he  
Bound for the Hall, and I think for a bride  
Blithe would her brother's acceptance be  
Maud could be gracious too, no doubt  
To a lord, a captain, a padded shape,  
A bought commission, a waxen face,  
A rabbit mouth that is ever agape—  
Bought ? what is it he cannot buy ?  
And therefore splenetic, personal, base,  
A wounded thing with a rancorous cry,  
At war with myself and a wretched race,  
Sick, sick to the heart of life, am I

## III.

Last week came one to the county town,  
To preach our poor little army down,  
And play the game of the despot kings,  
Tho' the state has done it and thrice as well  
This broad-brumm'd hawker of holy things,

Whose ear is cramm'd with his cotton, and rings  
Even in dreams to the chink of his pence,  
This huckster put down war ! can he tell  
Whether war be a cause or a consequence ?  
Put down the passions that make earth Hell !  
Down with ambition, avarice, pride,  
Jealousy, down ! cut off from the mind  
The bitter springs of anger and fear ,  
Down too, down at your own fireside,  
With the evil tongue and the evil ear,  
For each is at war with mankind

## IV

I wish I could hear again  
The chivalrous battle-song  
That she warbled alone in her joy !  
I might persuade myself then  
She would not do herself this great wrong,  
To take a wanton dissolute boy  
For a man and leader of men

## V

Ah God, for a man with heart, head, hand,  
Like some of the simple great ones gone  
For ever and ever by,  
One still strong man in a blatant land,

Whatever they call him, what care I,  
Aristocrat, democrat, autocrat—one  
Who can rule and dare not lie

## VI

And ah for a man to arise in me,  
That the man I am may cease to be !

XI

I.

O let the solid ground  
    Not fail beneath my feet  
Before my life has found  
    What some have found so sweet ,  
Then let come what come may,  
What matter if I go mad,  
I shall have had my day

II.

Let the sweet heavens endure,  
    Not close and darken above me  
Before I am quite quite sure  
    That there is one to love me ,  
Then let come what come may  
To a life that has been so sad,  
I shall have had my day.

## XII

## I

Buds in the high Hall-garden  
When twilight was falling,  
Maud, Maud, Maud, Maud,  
They were crying and calling

## II

Where was Maud ? in our wood ,  
And I, who else, was with her,  
Gathering woodland lilies,  
Myriads blow together

## III

Buds in our wood sang  
Ringing thro' the valleys,  
Maud is here, here, here  
In among the lilies



IV

I kiss'd her slender hand,  
    She took the kiss sedately ;  
Maud is not seventeen,  
    But she is tall and stately.

V

I to cry out on pride  
    Who have won her favour !  
O Maud were sue of Heaven  
    If lowliness could save her.

VI

I know the way she went  
    Home with her maiden posy,  
For her feet have touch'd the meadows  
    And left the daisies rosy

VII

Birds in the high Hall-garden  
    Were crying and calling to her,  
Where is Maud, Maud, Maud ?  
    One is come to woo her

## VIII

Look, a hoise at the door,  
And little King Charley snarling,  
Go back, my lord, across the moor,  
You are not her darling

## XIII

## I

Scorn'd, to be scorn'd by one that I scorn,  
Is that a matter to make me fret?  
That a calamity hard to be borne?  
Well, he may live to hate me yet  
Fool that I am to be vex't with his pride!  
I past him, I was crossing his lands,  
He stood on the path a little aside,  
His face, as I grant, in spite of spite,  
Has a broad-blown comeliness, red and white,  
And six feet two, as I think, he stands,  
But his essences turn'd the live air sick,  
And barbarous opulence jewel-thick  
Sunn'd itself on his breast and his hands

## II.

Who shall call me ungentle, unfair,  
I long'd so heartily then and there  
To give him the grasp of fellowship,

But while I past he was humming an air,  
Stopt, and then with a riding-whip  
Leisurely tapping a glossy boot,  
And curving a contumelious lip,  
Gorgonised me from head to foot  
With a stony British stare

## III

Why sits he here in his father's chair ?  
That old man never comes to his place  
Shall I believe him ashamed to be seen ?  
For only once, in the village street,  
Last year, I caught a glimpse of his face,  
A gray old wolf and a lean  
Scarcely, now, would I call him a cheat ,  
For then, perhaps, as a child of deceit,  
She might by a true descent be untrue ,  
And Maud is as true as Maud is sweet  
Tho' I fancy her sweetness only due  
To the sweeter blood by the other side ,  
Her mother has been a thing complete,  
However she came to be so allied.  
And fair without, faithful within,  
Maud to him is nothing akin  
Some peculiar mystic grace  
Made her only the child of her mother,

And heap'd the whole inherited sin  
On that huge scapegoat of the race,  
All, all upon the brother

IV

Peace, angry spirit, and let him be !  
Has not his sister smiled on me ?

## XIV.

## I.

Maud has a garden of roses  
And lilies fair on a lawn ,  
There she walks in her state  
And tends upon bed and bower,  
And thither I climb'd at dawn  
And stood by her garden-gate ,  
A lion ramps at the top,  
He is claspt by a passion-flower

## II

Maud's own little oak-room  
(Which Maud, like a precious stone  
Set in the heart of the carven gloom,  
Lights with herself, when alone  
She sits by her music and books  
And her brother lingers late  
With a roystering company) looks  
Upon Maud's own garden-gate .  
And I thought as I stood, if a hand, as white

As ocean-foam in the moon, were laid  
On the hasp of the window, and my Delight  
Had a sudden desire, like a glorious ghost, to glide,  
Like a beam of the seventh Heaven, down to my side,  
There were but a step to be made.

## III

The fancy flatter'd my mind,  
And again seem'd overbold ,  
Now I thought that she cared for me,  
Now I thought she was kind  
Only because she was cold

## IV

I heard no sound where I stood  
But the rivulet on from the lawn  
Running down to my own dark wood ,  
Or the voice of the long sea-wave as it swell'd  
Now and then in the dim-gray dawn ,  
But I look'd, and round, all round the house I beheld  
The death-white curtain drawn ,  
Felt a horror over me creep,  
Prickle my skin and catch my breath,  
Knew that the death-white curtain meant but sleep,  
Yet I shudder'd and thought like a fool of the sleep  
of death.

## XV.

So dark a mind within me dwells,  
And I make myself such evil cheer,  
That if *I* be dear to some one else,  
Then some one else may have much to fear  
But if *I* be dear to some one else,  
Then I should be to myself more dear  
Shall I not take care of all that I think,  
Yea ev'n of wretched meat and drink,  
If I be dear,  
If I be dear to some one else



## XVI

## I

This lump of earth has left his estate  
The lighter by the loss of his weight ,  
And so that he find what he went to seek,  
And fulsome Pleasure clog him, and drown  
His heart in the gross mud-honey of town,  
He may stay for a year who has gone for a week  
But this is the day when I must speak,  
And I see my Oread coming down,  
O this is the day !  
O beautiful creature, what am I  
That I dare to look her way ,  
Think I may hold dominion sweet,  
Lord of the pulse that is lord of her breast,  
And dream of her beauty with tender dread,  
From the delicate Arab arch of her feet  
To the grace that, bright and light as the crest  
Of a peacock, sits on her shining head,  
And she knows it not O, if she knew it,  
To know her beauty might half undo it

I know it the one bright thing to save  
My yet young life in the wilds of Time,  
Perhaps from madness, perhaps from crime,  
Perhaps from a selfish grave

## II

What, if she be fasten'd to this fool lord,  
Dare I bid her abide by her word ?  
Should I love her so well if she  
Had given her word to a thing so low ?  
Shall I love her as well if she  
Can break her word were it even for me ?  
I trust that it is not so.

## III

Catch not my breath, O clamorous heart,  
Let not my tongue be a thrall to my eye,  
For I must tell her before we part,  
I must tell her, or die.

XVII

Go not, happy day,  
    From the shining fields,  
Go not, happy day,  
    Till the maiden yields  
Rosy is the West,  
    Rosy is the South,  
Roses are her cheeks,  
    And a rose her mouth  
When the happy Yes  
    Falters from her lips,  
Pass and blush the news  
    Over glowing ships ,  
Over blowing seas,  
    Over seas at rest,  
Pass the happy news,  
    Blush it thro' the West ,  
Till the red man dance  
    By his red cedar-tree,  
And the red man's babe  
    Leap, beyond the sea

Blush from West to East,  
    Blush from East to West,  
Till the West is East,  
    Blush it thro' the West.  
Rosy is the West,  
    Rosy is the South,  
Roses are her cheeks,  
    And a rose her mouth

## XVIII

## I

I have led her home, my love, my only friend  
There is none like her, none  
And never yet so warmly ran my blood  
And sweetly, on and on  
Calming itself to the long-wish'd-for end,  
Full to the banks, close on the promised good

## II

None like her, none  
Just now the dry-tongued laurels' pattering talk  
Seem'd her light foot along the garden walk,  
And shook my heart to think she comes once more,  
But even then I heard her close the door,  
The gates of Heaven are closed, and she is gone

## III

There is none like her, none  
Nor will be when our summers have deceased  
O, art thou sighing for Lebanon

In the long breeze that streams to thy delicious East,  
Sighing for Lebanon,  
Dark cedar, tho' thy limbs have here increased,  
Upon a pastoral slope as fair,  
And looking to the South, and fed  
With honey'd rain and delicate air,  
And haunted by the starry head  
Of her whose gentle will has changed my fate,  
And made my life a perfumed altar-flame ,  
And over whom thy darkness must have spread  
With such delight as theirs of old, thy great  
Forefathers of the thornless garden, there  
Shadowing the snow-limb'd Eve from whom she came

## IV

Here will I lie, while these long branches sway,  
And you fair stars that crown a happy day  
Go in and out as if at merry play,  
Who am no more so all forlorn,  
As when it seem'd far better to be born  
To labour and the mattock-harden'd hand,  
Than nursed at ease and brought to understand  
A sad astrology, the boundless plan  
That makes you tyrants in your iron skies,  
Innumerable, pitiless, passionless eyes,  
Cold fires, yet with power to burn and brand  
His nothingness into man.

## V

But now shine on, and what care I,  
Who in this stormy gulf have found a pearl  
The countercharm of space and hollow sky,  
And do accept my madness, and would die  
To save from some slight shame one simple gulf.

## VI.

Would die ; for sullen-seeming Death may give  
More life to Love than is or ever was  
In our low world, where yet 'tis sweet to live  
Let no one ask me how it came to pass ,  
It seems that I am happy, that to me  
A livelier emerald twinkles in the grass,  
A purer sapphire melts into the sea.

## VII.

Not die ; but live a life of truest breath,  
And teach true life to fight with mortal wrongs  
O, why should Love, like men in drinking songs,  
Spice his fair banquet with the dust of death ?  
Make answer, Maud my bliss,  
Maud made my Maud by that long loving kiss,  
Life of my life, wilt thou not answer this ?  
'The dusky strand of Death inwoven here  
With dear Love's tie, makes Love himself more dear.'

## VIII

Is that enchanted moan only the swell  
Of the long waves that roll in yonder bay ?  
And hark the clock within, the silver knell  
Of twelve sweet hours that past in bridal white,  
And died to live, long as my pulses play ,  
But now by this my love has closed her sight  
And given false death her hand, and stol'n away  
To dreamful wastes where footless fancies dwell  
Among the fragments of the golden day  
May nothing there her maiden grace affright !  
Dear heart, I feel with thee the drowsy spell  
My bride to be, my evermore delight,  
My own heart's heart, my ownest own, farewell ,  
It is but for a little space I go  
And ye meanwhile far over moor and fell  
Beat to the noiseless music of the night !  
Has our whole earth gone nearer to the glow  
Of your soft splendours that you look so bright ?  
I have climb'd nearer out of lonely Hell  
Beat, happy stars, timing with things below,  
Beat with my heart more blest than heart can tell,  
Blest, but for some dark undercurrent woe  
That seems to draw—but it shall not be so .  
Let all be well, be well.



XIX

I

Her brother is coming back to-night,  
Breaking up my dream of delight

II

My dream? do I dream of bliss?  
I have walk'd awake with Truth  
O when did a morning shine  
So rich in atonement as this  
For my dark-dawning youth,  
Darken'd watching a mother decline  
And that dead man at her heart and mine  
For who was left to watch her but I?  
Yet so did I let my freshness die.

III.

I trust that I did not talk  
To gentle Maud in our walk  
(For often in lonely wanderings

I have cursed him even to lifeless things)  
But I trust that I did not talk,  
Not touch on her father's sin :  
I am sure I did but speak  
Of my mother's faded cheek  
When it slowly grew so thin,  
That I felt she was slowly dying  
Vext with lawyers and harass'd with debt :  
For how often I caught her with eyes all wet,  
Shaking her head at her son and sighing  
A world of trouble within !

## IV.

And Maud too, Maud was moved  
To speak of the mother she loved  
As one scarce less forlorn,  
Dying abroad and it seems apart  
From him who had ceased to share her heart,  
And ever mourning over the feud,  
The household Fury sprinkled with blood  
By which our houses are torn :  
How strange was what she said,  
When only Maud and the brother  
Hung over her dying bed—  
That Maud's dark father and mine  
Had bound us one to the other,

Betrothed us over their wine,  
On the day when Maud was born ;  
Seal'd her mine from her first sweet breath.  
Mine, mine by a right, from birth till death.  
Mine, mine—our fathers have sworn.

## v.

But the true blood spilt had in it a heat  
To dissolve the precious seal on a bond,  
That, if left uncancell'd, had been so sweet :  
And none of us thought of a something beyond,  
A desire that awoke in the heart of the child,  
As it were a duty done to the tomb,  
To be friends for her sake, to be reconciled ;  
And I was cursing them and my doom,  
And letting a dangerous thought run wild  
While often abroad in the fragrant gloom  
Of foreign churches—I see her there,  
Bright English lily, breathing a prayer  
To be friends, to be reconciled !

## vi.

But then what a flint is he !  
Abroad, at Florence, at Rome,  
I find whenever she touch'd on me  
This brother had laugh'd her down,

And at last, when each came home,  
He had darken'd into a frown,  
Chid her, and forbid her to speak  
To me, her friend of the years before ;  
And this was what had reddened her cheek  
When I bow'd to her on the moor.

## VII.

Yet Maud, altho' not blind  
To the faults of his heart and mind,  
I see she cannot but love him,  
And says he is rough but kind,  
And wishes me to approve him,  
And tells me, when she lay  
Sick once, with a fear of worse,  
That he left his wine and horses and play,  
Sat with her, read to her, night and day,  
And tended her like a nurse.

## VIII.

Kind? but the deathbed desire  
Spurn'd by this heir of the liar—  
Rough but kind? yet I know  
He has plotted against me in this,  
That he plots against me still.  
Kind to Maud? that were not amiss.

Well, rough but kind ; why let it be so :  
For shall not Maud have her will ?

## IX.

For, Maud, so tender and true,  
As long as my life endures  
I feel I shall owe you a debt,  
That I never can hope to pay ;  
And if ever I should forget  
That I owe this debt to you  
And for your sweet sake to yours ;  
O then, what then shall I say ?—  
If ever I *should* forget,  
May God make me more wretched  
Than ever I have been yet !

## X.

So now I have sworn to bury  
All this dead body of hate,  
I feel so free and so clear  
By the loss of that dead weight,  
That I should grow light-headed, I fear,  
Fantastically merry ;  
But that her brother comes, like a blight  
On my fresh hope, to the Hall to-night.

## XX.

## I.

Strange, that I felt so gay,  
Strange, that I tried to-day  
To beguile her melancholy ;  
The Sultan, as we name him,—  
She did not wish to blame him—  
But he vexed her and perplexed her  
With his worldly talk and folly :  
Was it gentle to reprove her  
For stealing out of view  
From a little lazy lover  
Who but claims her as his due ?  
Or for chilling his caresses  
By the coldness of her manners,  
Nay, the plainness of her dresses ?  
Now I know her but in two,  
Nor can pronounce upon it  
If one should ask me whether  
The habit, hat, and feather,  
Or the frock and gipsy bonnet

Be the neater and completer ;  
For nothing can be sweeter  
Than maiden Maud in either.

## II.

But to-morrow, if we live,  
Our ponderous squire will give  
A grand political dinner  
To half the squirelings near ;  
And Maud will wear her jewels,  
And the bird of prey will hover,  
And the titmouse hope to win her  
With his chirrup at her ear.

## III.

A grand political dinner  
To the men of many acres,  
A gathering of the Tory,  
A dinner and then a dance  
For the maids and marriage-makers,  
And every eye but mine will glance  
At Maud in all her glory.

## IV.

For I am not invited,  
But, with the Sultan's pardon,

I am all as well delighted,  
For I know her own rose-garden,  
And mean to linger in it  
Till the dancing will be over ;  
And then, oh then, come out to me  
For a minute, but for a minute,  
Come out to your own true lover,  
That your true lover may see  
Your glory also, and render  
All homage to his own darling,  
Queen Maud in all her splendour.



## XXI.

Rivulet crossing my ground,  
And bringing me down from the Hall  
This garden-rose that I found,  
Forgetful of Maud and me,  
And lost in trouble and moving round  
Here at the head of a tinkling fall,  
And trying to pass to the sea ;  
O Rivulet, born at the Hall,  
My Maud has sent it by thee  
(If I read her sweet will right)  
On a blushing mission to me,  
Saying in odour and colour, ‘ Ah, be  
Among the roses to-night.’

## XXII.

## I.

Come into the garden, Maud,  
For the black bat, night, has flown,  
Come into the garden, Maud,  
I am here at the gate alone ;  
And the woodbine spices are wafted abroad,  
And the musk of the rose is blown.

## II.

For a breeze of morning moves,  
And the planet of Love is on high,  
Beginning to faint in the light that she loves  
On a bed of daffodil sky,  
To faint in the light of the sun she loves,  
To faint in his light, and to die.

## III.

All night have the roses heard  
The flute, violin, bassoon ;

All night has the casement jessamine stirr'd  
To the dancers dancing in tune ;  
Till a silence fell with the waking bird,  
And a hush with the setting moon.

## IV.

I said to the lily, 'There is but one  
With whom she has heart to be gay.  
When will the dancers leave her alone ?  
She is weary of dance and play.'  
Now half to the setting moon are gone,  
And half to the rising day ;  
Low on the sand and loud on the stone  
The last wheel echoes away.

## V.

I said to the rose, 'The brief night goes  
In babble and revel and wine.  
O young lord-lover, what sighs are those,  
For one that will never be thine ?  
But mine, but mine,' so I sware to the rose,  
'For ever and ever, mine.'

## VI.

And the soul of the rose went into my blood,  
As the music clash'd in the hall ;

And long by the garden lake I stood,  
For I heard your rivulet fall  
From the lake to the meadow and on to the wood,  
Our wood, that is dearer than all ;

## VII.

From the meadow your walks have left so sweet  
That whenever a March-wind sighs  
He sets the jewel-print of your feet  
In violets blue as your eyes,  
To the woody hollows in which we meet  
And the valleys of Paradise.

## VIII.

The slender acacia would not shake  
One long milk-bloom on the tree ;  
The white lake-blossom fell into the lake  
As the pimpernel dozed on the lea ;  
But the rose was awake all night for your sake,  
Knowing your promise to me ;  
The lilies and roses were all awake,  
They sigh'd for the dawn and thee.

## IX.

Queen rose of the rosebud garden of girls,  
Come hither, the dances are done,

In gloss of satin and glimmer of pearls,  
Queen lily and rose in one ;  
Shine out, little head, sunning over with curls,  
To the flowers, and be their sun.

## X.

There has fallen a splendid tear  
From the passion-flower at the gate.  
She is coming, my dove, my dear ;  
She is coming, my life, my fate ;  
The red rose cries, 'She is near, she is near ;'  
And the white rose weeps, 'She is late ;'  
The larkspur listens, 'I hear, I hear ;'  
And the lily whispers, 'I wait.'

## XI.

She is coming, my own, my sweet ;  
Were it ever so airy a tread,  
My heart would hear her and beat,  
Were it earth in an earthy bed ;  
My dust would hear her and beat.  
Had I lain for a century dead ;  
Would start and tremble under her feet,  
And blossom in purple and red.

## PART II.

## I.

## I.

‘THE fault was mine, the fault was mine’—  
Why am I sitting here so stunn’d and still,  
Plucking the harmless wild-flower on the hill?—  
It is this guilty hand!—  
And there rises ever a passionate cry  
From underneath in the darkening land—  
What is it, that has been done?  
O dawn of Eden bright over earth and sky,  
The fires of Hell brake out of thy rising sun,  
The fires of Hell and of Hate ;  
For she, sweet soul, had hardly spoken a word.  
When her brother ran in his rage to the gate,  
He came with the babe-faced lord ;  
Heap’d on her terms of disgrace,  
And while she wept, and I strove to be cool,  
He fiercely gave me the lie,

Till I with as fierce an anger spoke,  
And he struck me, madman, over the face,  
Struck me before the languid fool,  
Who was gaping and grinning by :  
Struck for himself an evil stroke ;  
Wrought for his house an irredeemable woe ;  
For front to front in an hour we stood,  
And a million horrible bellowing echoes broke  
From the red-ribb'd hollow behind the wood,  
And thunder'd up into Heaven the Christless code,  
That must have life for a blow.  
Ever and ever afresh they seem'd to grow.  
Was it he lay there with a fading eye ?  
'The fault was mine,' he whisper'd, 'fly !'  
Then glided out of the joyous wood  
The ghastly Wraith of one that I know ;  
And there rang on a sudden a passionate cry,  
A cry for a brother's blood :  
It will ring in my heart and my ears, till I die, till  
I die.

## II.

Is it gone ? my pulses beat—  
What was it ? a lying trick of the brain ?  
Yet I thought I saw her stand,  
A shadow there at my feet,  
High over the shadowy land.

It is gone ; and the heavens fall in a gentle rain,  
When they should burst and drown with deluging  
                  storms

The feeble vassals of wine and anger and lust,  
The little hearts that know not how to forgive :  
Arise, my God, and strike, for we hold Thee just,  
Strike dead the whole weak race of venomous worms,  
That sting each other here in the dust ;  
We are not worthy to live.



II.

I.

See what a lovely shell,  
Small and pure as a pearl,  
Lying close to my foot,  
Frail, but a work divine,  
Made so fairly well  
With delicate spire and whorl,  
How exquisitely minute,  
A miracle of design !

II.

What is it? a learned man  
Could give it a clumsy name.  
Let him name it who can,  
The beauty would be the same.

III.

The tiny cell is forlorn,  
Void of the little living will  
That made it stir on the shore.  
Did he stand at the diamond door

Of his house in a rainbow frill ?  
Did he push, when he was uncurl'd,  
A golden foot or a fairy horn  
Thro' his dim water-world ?

## IV.

Slight, to be crush'd with a tap  
Of my finger-nail on the sand,  
Small, but a work divine,  
Frail, but of force to withstand,  
Year upon year, the shock  
Of cataract seas that snap  
The three decker's oaken spine  
Athwart the ledges of rock,  
Here on the Breton strand !

## V.

Breton, not Briton ; here  
Like a shipwreck'd man on a coast  
Of ancient fable and fear—  
Plagued with a flitting to and fro,  
A disease, a hard mechanic ghost  
That never came from on high  
Nor ever arose from below,  
But only moves with the moving eye,  
Flying along the land and the main—  
Why should it look like Maud ?

Am I to be overawed  
By what I cannot but know  
Is a juggle born of the brain ?

## VI.

Back from the Breton coast,  
Sick of a nameless fear,  
Back to the dark sea-line  
Looking, thinking of all I have lost ;  
An old song vexes my ear ;  
But that of Lamech is mine.

## VII.

For years, a measureless ill,  
For years, for ever, to part—  
But she, she would love me still ;  
And as long, O God, as she  
Have a grain of love for me,  
So long, no doubt, no doubt,  
Shall I nurse in my dark heart,  
However weary, a spark of will  
Not to be trampled out.

## VIII.

Strange, that the mind, when fraught  
With a passion so intense

One would think that it well  
Might drown all life in the eye,—  
That it should, by being so overwrought,  
Suddenly strike on a sharper sense  
For a shell, or a flower, little things  
Which else would have been past by !  
And now I remember, I,  
When he lay dying there,  
I noticed one of his many rings  
(For he had many, poor worm) and thought  
It is his mother's hair.

## IX.

Who knows if he be dead ?  
Whether I need have fled ?  
Am I guilty of blood ?  
However this may be,  
Comfort her, comfort her, all things good,  
While I am over the sea !  
Let me and my passionate love go by,  
But speak to her all things holy and high,  
Whatever happen to me !  
Me and my harmful love go by ;  
But come to her waking, find her asleep,  
Powers of the height, Powers of the deep,  
And comfort her tho' I die.

## III.

Courage, poor heart of stone !  
I will not ask thee why  
Thou canst not understand  
That thou art left for ever alone :  
Courage, poor stupid heart of stone.—  
Or if I ask thee why,  
Care not thou to reply :  
She is but dead, and the time is at hand  
When thou shalt more than die.

## IV

## I.

O that 'twere possible  
After long grief and pain  
To find the arms of my true love  
Round me once again !

## II.

When I was wont to meet her  
In the silent woody places  
By the home that gave me birth,  
We stood tranced in long embraces  
Mixt with kisses sweeter sweeter  
Than anything on earth.

## III.

A shadow flits before me,  
Not thou, but like to thee :  
Ah Christ, that it were possible  
For one short hour to see  
The souls we loved, that they might tell us  
What and where they be.

## IV.

It leads me forth at evening,  
It lightly winds and steals  
In a cold white robe before me,  
When all my spirit reels  
At the shouts, the leagues of lights,  
And the roaring of the wheels.

## V.

Half the night I waste in sighs,  
Half in dreams I sorrow after  
The delight of early skies ;  
In a wakeful doze I sorrow  
For the hand, the lips, the eyes,  
For the meeting of the morrow,  
The delight of happy laughter,  
The delight of low replies.

## VI.

'Tis a morning pure and sweet,  
And a dewy splendour falls  
On the little flower that clings  
To the turrets and the walls ;  
'Tis a morning pure and sweet,  
And the light and shadow fleet ;  
She is walking in the meadow,

And the woodland echo rings ;  
In a moment we shall meet ;  
She is singing in the meadow  
And the rivulet at her feet  
Ripples on in light and shadow  
To the ballad that she sings.

## VII.

Do I hear her sing as of old,  
My bird with the shining head,  
My own dove with the tender eye ?  
But there rings on a sudden a passionate cry,  
There is some one dying or dead,  
And a sullen thunder is roll'd ;  
For a tumult shakes the city,  
And I wake, my dream is fled ;  
In the shuddering dawn, behold,  
Without knowledge, without pity,  
By the curtains of my bed  
That abiding phantom cold.

## VIII.

Get thee hence, nor come again,  
Mix not memory with doubt,  
Pass, thou deathlike type of pain,  
Pass and cease to move about !



'Tis the blot upon the brain  
That *will* show itself without.

## IX.

Then I rise, the eavedrops fall,  
And the yellow vapours choke  
The great city sounding wide ;  
The day comes, a dull red ball  
Wrapt in drifts of lurid smoke  
On the misty river-tide.

## X.

Thro' the hubbub of the market  
I steal, a wasted frame,  
It crosses here, it crosses there,  
Thro' all that crowd confused and loud,  
The shadow still the same ;  
And on my heavy eyelids  
My anguish hangs like shame.

## XI.

Alas for her that met me,  
That heard me softly call,  
Came glimmering thro' the laurels  
At the quiet evenfall,

In the garden by the turrets  
Of the old manorial hall.

## XII.

Would the happy spirit descend,  
From the realms of light and song,  
In the chamber or the street,  
As she looks among the blest,  
Should I fear to greet my friend  
Or to say 'Forgive the wrong,'  
Or to ask her, 'Take me, sweet,  
To the regions of thy rest'?

## XIII.

But the broad light glares and beats,  
And the shadow flits and fleets  
And will not let me be ;  
And I loathe the squares and streets,  
And the faces that one meets,  
Hearts with no love for me :  
Always I long to creep  
Into some still cavern deep,  
There to weep, and weep, and weep  
My whole soul out to thee.

## V.

## I.

Dead, long dead,  
Long dead !  
And my heart is a handful of dust,  
And the wheels go over my head,  
And my bones are shaken with pain,  
For into a shallow grave they are thrust,  
Only a yard beneath the street,  
And the hoofs of the horses beat, beat,  
The hoofs of the horses beat,  
Beat into my scalp and my brain,  
With never an end to the stream of passing feet,  
Driving, hurrying, marrying, burying,  
Clamour and rumble, and ringing and clatter,  
And here beneath it is all as bad,  
For I thought the dead had peace, but it is  
    not so ;  
To have no peace in the grave, is that not sad ?  
But up and down and to and fro,  
Ever about me the dead men go ;

And then to hear a dead man chatter  
Is enough to drive one mad.

## II.

Wretchedest age, since Time began,  
They cannot even bury a man ;  
And tho' we paid our tithes in the days that are gone,  
Not a bell was rung, not a prayer was read ;  
It is that which makes us loud in the world of the dead,  
There is none that does his work, not one ;  
A touch of their office might have sufficed,  
But the churchmen fain would kill their church,  
As the churches have kill'd their Christ.

## III.

See, there is one of us sobbing,  
No limit to his distress ;  
And another, a lord of all things, praying  
To his own great self, as I guess ;  
And another, a statesman there, betraying  
His party-secret, fool, to the press ;  
And yonder a vile physician, blabbing  
The case of his patient—all for what ?  
To tickle the maggot born in an empty head,  
And wheedle a world that loves him not,  
For it is but a world of the dead.

## IV.

Nothing but idiot gabble !  
For the prophecy given of old  
And then not understood,  
Has come to pass as foretold ;  
Not let any man think for the public good,  
But babble, merely for babble.  
For I never whisper'd a private affair  
Within the hearing of cat or mouse,  
No, not to myself in the closet alone,  
But I heard it shouted at once from the top of the house;  
Everything came to be known.  
Who told *him* we were there ?

## V.

Not that gray old wolf, for he came not back  
From the wilderness, full of wolves, where he used to  
lie ;  
He has gather'd the bones for his o'ergrown whelp to  
crack ;  
Crack them now for yourself, and howl, and die.

## VI.

Prophet, curse me the blabbing lip,  
And curse me the British vermin, the rat ;

I know not whether he came in the Hanover ship,  
But I know that he lies and listens mute  
In an ancient mansion's crannies and holes :  
Arsenic, arsenic, sure, would do it,  
Except that now we poison our babes, poor souls !  
It is all used up for that.

## VII.

Tell him now : she is standing here at my head ;  
Not beautiful now, not even kind  
He may take her now ; for she never speaks her  
mind,  
But is ever the one thing silent here.  
She is not *of* us, as I divine ;  
She comes from another stiller world of the dead,  
Stiller, not fairer than mine.

## VIII.

But I know where a garden grows,  
Fairer than aught in the world beside,  
All made up of the lily and rose  
That blow by night, when the season is good,  
To the sound of dancing music and flutes :  
It is only flowers, they had no fruits,  
And I almost fear they are not roses, but blood ;

For the keeper was one, so full of pride,  
He linkt a dead man there to a spectral bride;  
For he, if he had not been a Sultan of brutes,  
Would he have that hole in his side?

## IX.

But what will the old man say?  
He laid a cruel snare in a pit  
To catch a friend of mine one stormy day;  
Yet now I could even weep to think of it;  
For what will the old man say  
When he comes to the second corpse in the pit?

## X.

Friend, to be struck by the public foe,  
Then to strike him and lay him low,  
That were a public merit, far,  
Whatever the Quaker holds, from sin;  
But the red life spilt for a private blow—  
I swear to you, lawful and lawless war  
Are scarcely even akin.

## XI.

O me, why have they not buried me deep enough?  
Is it kind to have made me a grave so rough,  
Me, that was never a quiet sleeper?

Maybe still I am but half-dead ;  
Then I cannot be wholly dumb ;  
I will cry to the steps above my head  
And somebody, surely, some kind heart will come  
To bury me, bury me  
Deeper, ever so little deeper.



## PART III.

## VI.

## I.

My life has crept so long on a broken wing  
Thro' cells of madness, haunts of horror and fear,  
That I come to be grateful at last for a little thing :  
My mood is changed, for it fell at a time of year  
When the face of night is fair on the dewy downs,  
And the shining daffodil dies, and the Charioteer  
And starry Gemini hang like glorious crowns  
Over Orion's grave low down in the west,  
That like a silent lightning under the stars  
She seem'd to divide in a dream from a band of the  
    blest,  
And spoke of a hope for the world in the coming wars—  
'And in that hope, dear soul, let trouble have rest,  
Knowing I tarry for thee,' and pointed to Mars  
As he glow'd like a ruddy shield on the Lion's  
    breast.

## II.

And it was but a dream, yet it yielded a dear delight  
To have look'd, tho' but in a dream, upon eyes so fair,  
That had been in a weary world my one thing bright ;  
And it was but a dream, yet it lighten'd my despair  
When I thought that a war would arise in defence of  
the right,

That an iron tyranny now should bend or cease,  
The glory of manhood stand on his ancient height,  
Nor Britain's one sole God be the millionaire :  
No more shall commerce be all in all, and Peace  
Pipe on her pastoral hillock a languid note,  
And watch her harvest ripen, her herd increase,  
Nor the cannon-bullet rust on a slothful shore,  
And the cobweb woven across the cannon's throat  
Shall shake its threaded tears in the wind no more.

## III.

And as months ran on and rumour of battle grew,  
'It is time, it is time, O passionate heart,' said I  
(For I cleaved to a cause that I felt to be pure and  
true),  
'It is time, O passionate heart and morbid eye,  
That old hysterical mock-disease should die.'  
And I stood on a giant deck and mix'd my breath

With a loyal people shouting a battle cry,  
Till I saw the dreary phantom arise and fly  
Far into the North, and battle, and seas of death.

## IV.

Let it go or stay, so I wake to the higher aims  
Of a land that has lost for a little her lust of gold,  
And love of a peace that was full of wrongs and shames  
Horrible, hateful, monstrous, not to be told ;  
And hail once more to the banner of battle unroll'd !  
Tho' many a light shall darken, and many shall weep  
For those that are crush'd in the clash of jarring claims,  
Yet God's just wrath shall be wreak'd on a giant liar ;  
And many a darkness into the light shall leap,  
And shine in the sudden making of splendid names,  
And noble thought be freer under the sun,  
And the heart of a people beat with one desire ;  
For the peace, that I deem'd no peace, is over and done,  
And now by the side of the Black and the Baltic deep,  
And deathful-grinning mouths of the fortress, flames  
The blood-red blossom of war with a heart of fire.

## V.

Let it flame or fade, and the war roll down like a wind,  
We have proved we have hearts in a cause, we are noble  
still,

And myself have awaked, as it seems, to the better  
mind ;

It is better to fight for the good than to rail at the  
ill ;

I have felt with my native land, I am one with my  
kind,

I embrace the purpose of God, and the doom  
assign'd

## APPENDIX.



Then she let some one sing to us. dighlir more  
She minutes pledged with mase. & as maid  
Of those behind her smote her harp & sang  
~~Tears, idle~~ Tears, I know not what they mean.  
Tears from the depth of some divine despair  
Pulse in the heart & gather to the eyes  
In looking on the happy Autumn fields  
And thinking of the days that are no more.

Fresh as the first beam glittering on a sail  
That brings one friends up from the underworld  
Sad as the last which reddens over one  
That sinks with all we love below the verge  
So sad, so fresh the days that are no more.

As sad & strange as in dark summer - dawn  
The earliest pipe of half-awaken'd birds  
To dying ears when unto dying eyes  
The casement slowly grows a glimmering square  
So sad, so strange the days that are no more.

Dear as remember'd kisses after death  
And sweet as those by hopeless fancy feign'd  
On lips that are for others; deep as love  
Deep as first love, & wild with all regret  
I death in life, the days that are no more

FROM THE ORIGINAL MS. OF MAUD.

Let not the solid ground  
Fail beneath my feet  
Before my life has found  
What some have found so sweet  
Then let come what come may,  
What matter if I go mad,  
I shall have had my day.

Let the sweet Heavens endure  
Not close & darken above me,  
Before I am quite quite sure  
That there is one to love me  
Then let come what come may  
To a life that has been so sad  
I shall have lived my day.



NOTES.



## NOTES.

### AUTHOR'S INTRODUCTORY NOTES TO *THE PRINCESS*.

IN the Prologue the "Tale from mouth to mouth" was a game which I have more than once played when I was at Trinity College, Cambridge, with my brother-undergraduates. Of course, if he "that inherited the tale" had not attended very carefully to his predecessors, there were contradictions ; and if the story were historical, occasional anachronisms.

In defence of what some have called the too poetical passages, it should be recollected that the poet of the party was requested to "dress the tale up poetically," and he was full of the "gallant and heroic chronicle." A parable is perhaps the teacher that can most surely enter in at all doors.

In 1851 the "weird seizures" of the Prince were inserted. Moreover, the words "dream-shadow," "were and were not" doubtless refer to the anachronisms and improbabilities of the story. Compare the Prologue :

Seven and yet one, like shadows in a dream,

and p. 101, line 18.

And like a flash the weird affection came :

\* \* \* \* \*

I seem'd to move in old memorial tilts,  
And doing battle with forgotten ghosts,  
To dream myself the shadow of a dream.

It may be remarked that there is scarcely anything in the story which is not prophetically glanced at in the Prologue.

The child is the link thro' the parts, as shown in the Songs (inserted 1850), which are the best interpreters of the poem.

Some of my remarks on passages in *The Princess* have been published by Dawson of Canada (1885), who copied them from the following letter which I wrote to him criticising his edition of *The Princess*.

I thank you for your able and thoughtful essay on *The Princess*. You have seen amongst other things that if women ever were to play such freaks, the burlesque and the tragic might go hand in hand. . . . Your explanatory notes are very much to the purpose, and I do not object to your finding parallelisms. They must always occur. A man (a Chinese scholar) some time ago wrote to me saying that in an unknown, untranslated Chinese poem there were two whole lines<sup>1</sup> of mine almost word for word. Why not? Are not human eyes all over the world looking at the same objects, and must there not consequently be coincidences of thought and impressions and expressions?

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<sup>1</sup> The Peak is high, and the stars are high,  
And the thought of a man is higher.

*The Voice and the Peak.*

It is scarcely possible for any one to say or write anything in this late time of the world to which, in the rest of the literature of the world, a parallel could not somewhere be found. But when you say that this passage or that was suggested by Wordsworth or Shelley or another, I demur; and more, I wholly disagree. There was a period in my life when, as an artist, Turner for instance, takes rough sketches of landscape, etc., in order to work them eventually into some great picture, so I was in the habit of chronicling, in four or five words or more, whatever might strike me as picturesque in Nature. I never put these down, and many and many a line has gone away on the north wind, but some remain : *e.g.*

*A full sea glazed with muffled moonlight.*

*Suggestion.*

The sea one night at Torquay, when Torquay was the most lovely sea-village in England, tho' now a smoky town. The sky was covered with thin vapour, and the moon behind it.

*A great black cloud*

*Drags inward from the deep.*

*Suggestion.*

A coming storm seen from the top of Snowdon.

In the *Idylls of the King*.

*With all*

*Its stormy crests that smoke against the skies.*

*Suggestion.*

A storm which came upon us in the middle of the North Sea.

*As the water-lily starts and slides.*

*Suggestion.*

Water-lilies in my own pond, seen on a gusty day with my own eyes. They did start and slide in the sudden puffs of wind till caught and stayed by the tether of their own stalks, quite as true as Wordsworth's simile and more in detail.

*A wild wind shook,—  
Follow, follow, thou shalt win.*

*Suggestion.*

I was walking in the New Forest. A wind did arise and

*Shake the songs, the whispers, and the shrieks  
Of the wild woods together.*

The wind I believe was a west wind, but because I wished the Prince to go south, I turned the wind to the south, and naturally the wind said "follow." I believe the resemblance which you note is just a chance one. Shelley's lines are not familiar to me, tho' of course, if they occur in the *Prometheus*,<sup>1</sup> I must have read them. I could multiply instances, but I will not bore you, and far indeed am I from asserting that books as well as Nature are not, and ought not to be, suggestive to the poet. I am sure that I myself, and many others, find a peculiar charm in those passages of such great masters as Virgil or Milton where they adopt the creation of a bygone poet, and reclothe it, more or less, according to their own fancy. But there is, I fear, a prosaic set growing up among us,

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<sup>1</sup> A wind arose among the pines, etc.

editors of booklets, book-worms, index-hunters, or men of great memories and no imagination, who *impute themselves* to the poet, and so believe that *he*, too, has no imagination, but is for ever poking his nose between the pages of some old volume in order to see what he can appropriate. They will not allow one to say "Ring the bell" without finding that we have taken it from Sir P. Sidney, or even to use such a simple expression as the ocean "roars," without finding out the precise verse in Homer or Horace from which we have plagiarised it (fact).

I have known an old fish-wife, who had lost two sons at sea, clench her fist at the advancing tide on a stormy day, and cry out, "Ay! roar, do! how I hates to see thee show thy white teeth." Now if I had adopted her exclamation and put it into the mouth of some old woman in one of my poems, I daresay the critics would have thought it original enough, but would most likely have advised me to go to Nature for my old women and not to my own imagination;<sup>1</sup> and indeed it is a strong figure.

Here is another anecdote about suggestion. When I was about twenty or twenty-one I went on a tour to the Pyrenees. Lying among these mountains before a waterfall<sup>2</sup> that comes down one thousand or twelve hundred feet I sketched it (according to my custom then) in these words:

Slow-dropping veils of thinnest lawn.

When I printed this, a critic informed me that "lawn" was the material used in theatres to imitate a waterfall,

<sup>1</sup> He used to compare with this the Norfolk saying which we heard when we were staying with the Rev. C. T. Digby at Warham: "The sea's a-moanin'; she's lost the wind."

<sup>2</sup> In the Cirque de Gavarnie.

and graciously added, "Mr. T. should not go to the boards of a theatre but to Nature herself for his suggestions." And I *had* gone to Nature herself.

I think it is a moot point whether, if I had known how that effect was produced on the stage, I should have ventured to publish the line.

I find that I have written, quite contrary to my custom, a letter, when I had merely intended to thank you for your interesting commentary.

Thanking you again for it, I beg you to believe me

Very faithfully yours,

A. TENNYSON.

Before the first edition came out, I deliberated with myself whether I should put songs between the separate divisions of the poem; again I thought that the poem would explain itself, but the public did not see the drift.

The first song I wrote was named "The Losing of the Child." The child is sitting on the bank of the river and playing with flowers; a flood comes down; a dam has been broken thro'—the child is borne down by the flood; the whole village distracted; after a time the flood has subsided; the child is thrown safe and sound again upon the bank; and there is a chorus of jubilant women.

The child was sitting on the bank

Upon a stormy day.

He loved the river's roaring sound;

The river rose and burst his bound,

Flooded fifty leagues around,

Took the child from off the ground,

And bore the child away.



O the child so meek and wise,  
    Who made us wise and mild !  
All was strife at home about him,  
Nothing could be done without him ;  
Father, mother, sister, brother,  
All accusing one another ;  
    O to lose the child !

The river left the child unhurt,  
    But far within the wild.  
Then we brought him home again,  
Peace and order come again,  
The river sought his bound again,  
The child was lost and found again,  
    And we will keep the child.

Another old song of mine I intended to insert was that of "The Doctor's Daughter" :

Sweet Kitty Sandilands,  
    The daughter of the doctor,  
We drest her in the Proctor's bands,  
    And past her for the Proctor.

All the men ran from her  
    That would have hasten'd to her,  
All the men ran from her  
    That would have come to woo her.

Up the street we took her  
    As far as to the Castle,  
Jauntily sat the Proctor's cap  
    And from it hung the tassel.

“Sir Ralph” is another song which I omitted :

Ralph would fight in Edith's sight,  
For Ralph was Edith's lover,  
Ralph went down like a fire to the fight,  
Struck to the left and struck to the right,  
Roll'd them over and over.  
'Gallant Sir Ralph,' said the king.

Casques were crack'd and hauberks hack'd,  
Lances snapt in sunder,  
Rang the stroke and sprang the blood,  
Knights were thwack'd and riven, and hew'd  
Like broad oaks with thunder.  
'O what an arm,' said the king.

Edith bow'd her stately head,  
Saw them lie confounded,  
Edith Montfort bow'd her head,  
Crown'd her knight's, and flush'd as red  
As poppies when she crown'd it.  
'Take her, Sir Ralph,' said the king.

So Lilia sang. I thought she was possess'd  
She struck such warbling fire into the notes.

[Charles Kingsley writes in *Fraser's Magazine*, September 1850 :—

“At the end of the first canto, fresh from the description of the female college, with its professoresses and hostleresses, and other 'Utopian monsters, we turn the page, and—

As through the land at eve we went.

\* \* \* \* \*

O there above the little grave

We kiss'd again with tears.

Between the next two cantos intervenes the well-known cradle song, perhaps the best of all; and at the next interval is the equally well-known bugle-song, the idea of which is that of twin-labour and twin-fame in a pair of lovers. In the next the memory of wife and child inspirits the soldier on the field; in the next the sight of the fallen hero's child opens the sluices of his widow's tears; and in the last ('Ask me no more') the poet has succeeded in superadding a new form of emotion to a canto in which he seemed to have exhausted every resource of pathos which his subject allowed."—ED.]

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p. 1. *THE PRINCESS; A MEDLEY*. Published in 1847.  
Dedicated to Henry Lushington in 1848.

[Dawson, a Canadian who edited *The Princess*, and to whom my father wrote as stated above, says: "At the time of the publication of *The Princess* the surface-thought of England was intent solely upon Irish famines, corn-laws and free-trade. It was only after many years that it became conscious of anything being wrong in the position of women. . . . No doubt such ideas were at the time 'in the air' in England, but

the dominant, practical Philistinism scoffed at them as 'ideas' banished to America, that refuge for exploded European absurdities. I believe the *Vindication of the Rights of Woman*, by Mary Wollstonecraft (1792), first turned the attention of the people of England to the 'wrongs of women.' "

As for the various characters in the poem, they give the different views of Woman's higher education ; and as for the heroine herself, the Princess Ida, the poet who created her considered her as one of the noblest among his women. The stronger the man or woman, the more of the lion or lioness untamed, the greater the man or woman tamed. In the end we see this lioness-like woman subduing the elements of her humanity to that which is highest within her, and recognizing the relation in which she stands toward the order of the world and toward God—

A greater than all knowledge beat her down.

The plan of *The Princess* may have suggested itself when the project of a Women's College was in my father's mind (1839), or it may have arisen in its mock-heroic form from a Cambridge joke, such as he commemorated in the lines, "The Doctor's Daughter." See above, p. 243.—ED.]

## THE PROLOGUE.

The Prologue was written about a feast of the Mechanics' Institute held in the Lushingtons' grounds at Park House, near Maidstone, 6th July 1842.

- p.* 2. line 1. *calumets*. Longfellow sent me one of these pipes of peace, which belonged to a Red Indian chief.
- p.* 5. line 20. *And he had breathed the Proctor's dogs*. Made the proctor's attendants out of breath.
- p.* 6. line 25. *Emperor-moths, Saturnia Carpini*.

## CANTO I.

- p.* 11. line 19. *Galen*, the great doctor of Pergamus, 131 to 200 A.D.
- p.* 12. line 14.

*Was proxy-wedded with a bootless calf.*

The proxy of the king used to place his bare leg under the coverlet of the king's betrothed.

[Bacon in his *Henry VII.* writes of the proxy marriage of Maximilian, the king of the Romans, with Anne of Brittany, 1489 :

“ For she was not only publicly contracted, but stated as a bride, and solemnly bedded ;



## CANTO II.

p. 25. line 17. *Sleek Odalisques*, female slaves of the harem.

p. 25. lines 18, 19.

*but she*

*That taught the Sabine how to rule.*

The wood-nymph Egeria, who was said to have given the laws to Numa Pompilius.

[“And in all that he did, he knew that he should please the gods; for he did everything by the direction of the nymph Egeria, who honoured him so much that she took him to be her husband, and taught him in her sacred grove, by the spring that welled out from the rock, all that he was to do towards the gods and towards men.” Arnold’s *History of Rome*, vol. i. ch. i.; Livy, i. 19; Ovid, *Fasti*, iii. 276.—ED.]

p. 25. line 20.

*The foundress of the Babylonian wall.*

Semiramis. [Diodorus, ii. viii.—ED.]

p. 25. line 21.

*The Carian Artemisia strong in war.*

She who fought so bravely for Xerxes at Salamis that he said that his women had become men and his men women. [Herod.

viii. 88 : Ξέρξην δὲ εἶπαι λέγεται πρὸς τὰ φραζόμενα· Οἱ μὲν ἄνδρες γεγόνασί μοι γυναικες, αἱ δὲ γυναῖκες ἄνδρες.—ED.]

p. 25. line 22.

*The Rhodope, that built the pyramid.*

A celebrated Greek courtesan of Thracian origin, who was said to have built a pyramid near Memphis. Ælian relates that she married Psammetichus, King of Egypt.

“A statelier pyramid to her I’ll rear  
Than Rhodope’s or Memphis’ ever was.”

I *Henry VI.* I. vi. 22.

Doricha was probably her real name (she is so called by Sappho), and she perhaps received that of Rhodôpis, “rosy-cheeked,” on account of her beauty.

p. 25. line 23. *Clelia*, who swam the Tiber in escaping from Porsenna’s camp (Livy, ii. 13).

p. 25. line 23. *Cornelia*, mother of the Gracchi.

p. 25. line 23. *Palmyrene*. Zenobia, Queen of Palmyra.  
[See Gibbon, ch. xi. *sub anno* A.D. 272.—ED.]

p. 25. line 25. *Agrippina*, grand-daughter of Augustus, married to Germanicus.

p. 26. line 22. *headed like a star*, with bright golden hair. [Cf. *II.* vi. 401 : ἀλέγκιον ἀστέρι καλῶ.—ED.]



p. 26. lines 25, 26.

*but no livelier than the dame  
That whisper'd 'Asses' ears.'*

Midas in *The Wyf of Bathe's Tale* confides the secret of his hairy asses' ears only to his wife.

[The good dame could not resist telling it to a neighbouring "mareys" in a whisper.

And as a bitore bombleth in the myre  
She leyde hir mouth unto the water doun :  
'Biwreye me nat, thou water, with thy soun,'  
Quod she, 'to thee I telle it and namo,—  
Myn housbonde hath longe asses erys two.'

ED.]

p. 27. line 3.

*This world was once a fluid haze of light, etc.*

The nebular theory as formulated by Laplace.

[Cf. *In Memoriam*, CXVIII. iii. ; LXXXIX. xii.  
—ED.]

p. 27. line 14. *Appraised the Lycian custom.* Herodotus (1. 173) says that the Lycians took their names from their mothers instead of their fathers.

p. 27. line 15. [*Lar* or *Lars*, as in *Lars Porsena*, signifies noble.—ED.]

p. 27. line 15. *Lucumo* is an Etruscan prince or priest.

p. 27. line 19. *Salique.* The laws of the Salian Franks forbade inheritance by women.

p. 27. lines 20, 21. *touch'd . . . contempt.* Had she heard that, according to the Mohammedan doctrine, hell was chiefly occupied by women?

p. 28. line 12. *if more was more.* Greater in size meant greater in power.

p. 31. line 23.

*As he bestrode my Grandsire.*

In defence. [Cf. Shakespeare, 1 *Hen. IV.* v. i. 122, and *Comedy of Errors*, v. i. 192: "When I bestrid thee in the wars."—ED.]

p. 33. line 11.

*The Lucius Junius Brutus of my kind?*

Who condemned his sons to death for conspiracy against the city (Livy, ii. 5).

p. 34. line 24.

*That clad her like an April daffodilly.*

The *Quarterly Review* objected to "*April daffodilly.*" Daffodils in the North of England belong as much to April as to March. On the 15th of April in the streets of Dublin I remember a man presenting me with a handful of daffodils; and in 1887 at Farringford I saw daffodils still in bloom in May.

p. 35. line 1. *As bottom agates, etc.* It has been said that I took this simile partly from Beaumont and Fletcher, partly from Shakespeare, whereas I made it while I was bathing in Wales.

p. 39. line 7.

*The long hall glitter'd like a bed of flowers.*

Lady Psyche's "side" (pupils) wore lilac robes, and Lady Blanche's robes of daffodil colour.

p. 39. line 11. *Astræan*. Astræa, daughter of Zeus and Themis, is to come back first of the celestials on the return of the Golden Age [even as she was the last to leave earth in the Age of Iron :

*Victa jacet pietas, et virgo caede madentes  
Ultima caelestum terras Astraea reliquit.*

*Ov. Met. i. 150.—ED.]*

### CANTO III.

p. 46. line 4. *Consonant . . . note*. If two stringed instruments are together, and a note is struck on one, the other will vibrate with the same harmony.

p. 47. line 4. *The Samian Herè*. The Greek Herè, whose favourite abode was Samos.

p. 47. line 5.

*A Memnon smitten with the morning Sun.*

The statue in Egypt which gave forth a musical note when "smitten with the morning sun."

[Cf. Pausanias i. 42 and *The Palace of Art* :

And from her lips, as morn from Memnon,  
 drew  
 Rivers of melodies.

ED.]

p. 49. line 10. *ran up his furrowy forks.* The early editions have "dark-blue forks" or peaks.

p. 51. line 18.

*'Alas your Highness breathes full East,' I said.*  
 A playful reference to the cold manner of an Eastern queen and the east wind.

p. 52. line 24. *ποι στο.* δὲς ποῦ στῶ καὶ κόσμον κινήσω  
 ("Give me where I may stand and I will move the world"), an often-quoted saying of Archimedes.

p. 53. line 14. *gynæceum*, women's quarters in a Greek house.

p. 54. line 3. *shook the woods.* They shook in the wind made by the cataract.

p. 54. line 13. *Diotima.* Said to have been an instructress of Socrates. She was a priestess of Mantinea. (Cf. Plato's *Symposium*.)

p. 54. line 22.

*And cram him with the fragments of the grave.*

See Hogarth's picture in the "Stages of Cruelty." It was asserted that they used to give dogs the remnants of the dissecting-room.

p. 55. line 25. *Elysian lawns* are the lawns of Elysium and have nothing to do with Troy, as some critics explain, or perhaps they refer to the Islands of the Blest. Cf. Pindar, *Olympia*, ii. 128.

p. 56. line 6. *Corinna*. She is the Boeotian poetess who is said to have triumphed over Pindar in poetical competition (Pausanias, ix. 22). The Princess probably exaggerates.

## CANTO IV.

The opening song was written after hearing the echoes at Killarney in 1848. When I was there I heard a bugle blown beneath the "Eagle's Nest," and eight distinct echoes.

p. 59. line 1.

*There sinks the nebulous star we call the Sun.*

Norman Lockyer says that this is a true description of the sun.

p. 60. line 3.

*Tears, idle tears, I know not what they mean.*

This song came to me on the yellowing autumn-tide at Tintern Abbey, full for me of its bygone memories. It is the sense of the abiding in the transient.

[My father thought that his brother Charles

Tennyson Turner's sonnet "Time and Twilight" had the same sort of mystic *damonisch* feeling.

### TIME AND TWILIGHT

In the dark twilight of an autumn morn  
 I stood within a little country-town,  
 Wherefrom a long acquainted path went down  
 To the dear village haunts where I was born ;  
 The low of oxen on the rainy wind,  
 Death and the Past, came up the well-known  
                   road,  
 And bathed my heart with tears, but stirred  
                   my mind  
 To tread once more the track so long untrod ;  
 But I was warned, "Regrets which are not  
                   thrust  
 Upon thee, seek not ; for this sobbing breeze  
 Will but unman thee : thou art bold to trust  
 Thy woe-worn thoughts among these roaring  
                   trees,  
 And gleams of by-gone playgrounds. Is't no  
                   crime  
 To rush by night into the arms of Time ?"  
Ed.]

p. 61. line 13. *rough kex*, hemlock.

p. 61. lines 14, 15.

*beard-blown goat*

*Hang on the shaft.*

The wind blew his beard on the height of the ruined pillar.

[*Wild figtree split, etc.* Cf. Juvenal, x. 145—ED.]

p. 63. line 2.

*Like the Ithacensian suitors in old time,  
 . . . laugh'd with alien lips.*

[Cf. *Odyssey*, xx. 347 :

οἱ δ' ἤδη γναθμοῖσι γελῶων ἀλλοτρίουσιν.

ED.]

p. 63. line 8. *meadow-crake*, corn-crake or landrail.

p. 63. line 23. *Valkyrian hymns*. [Like those sung by the Valkyrian maidens, "the choosers of the slain," in the Northern mythology.—ED.]

p. 66. line 6. *Caryatids*, "female figures used as bearing shafts" (Vitruv. i.), e.g. the maidens supporting the light entablature of the portico of the Erechtheum at Athens.

p. 66. lines 8, 9.

*Of open-work in which the hunter rued  
 His rash intrusion.*

Actæon turned into a stag for looking on Diana bathing.

p. 68. lines 8, 9.

*But as the waterlily starts and slides  
 Upon the level in little puffs of wind:*

Waterlilies in my own pond, and seen by me  
on a gusty day. They started and slid in the  
sudden puffs of wind till caught and stayed  
by the tether of their own stalks. (See *supra*,  
letter to Dawson.)

p. 68. line 19.

*Bubbled the nightingale and heeded not.*

When I was in a friend's garden in York-  
shire, I heard a nightingale singing with such  
a frenzy of passion that it was unconscious of  
everything else, and not frightened though I  
came and stood quite close beside it. I saw  
its eye flashing and felt the air bubble in my  
ear through the vibration.

p. 68. line 22. *Mnemosyne*, goddess of memory, mother  
of the Muses.

p. 69 line 2. *mystic fire*, St. Elmo's fire.

[St. Elmo's phosphorescent light flickers on  
the tops of masts when a storm is brewing.  
Cf. *Tempest*, 1. ii. 197, and Longfellow's  
*Golden Legend* :

"Last night I saw St. Elmo's stars,  
With their glimmering lanterns all at play,  
On the tops of the masts, and the tips of the  
spars,  
And I knew we should have foul weather  
to-day."

ED.]

p. 69. line 7. *bloozed*, blown-red.



p. 71. line 1.

*A lidless watcher of the public weal.*

Lidless = wakeful, wide-eyed.

p. 72. line 20. *A Niobe daughter.* Niobe was proud of her twelve children, and in consequence boasted herself as superior to Leto, mother of Apollo and Artemis, who in revenge shot them all dead.

p. 73. lines 9, 10.

*When the wild peasant rights himself, the rick  
Flames, and his anger reddens in the heavens.*

I remember seeing thirty ricks burning near Cambridge, and I helped to pass the bucket from the well to help to quench the fire. [Cf. *To Mary Boyle*, verse vii. and verse x.—Ed.]

p. 75. line 20. *dwarfs of presage.* [Afterwards seen to be far short of expectation.—Ed.]

p. 77. lines 13-15.

*Fixt like a beacon-tower above the waves  
Of tempest, when the crimson-rolling eye  
Glares ruin, etc.*

[Cf. *Enoch Arden* :

Allured him, as the beacon-blaze allures  
The bird of passage, till he madly strikes  
Against it, and beats out his weary life.

Ed.]

p. 81. Song beginning

*Thy voice is heard thro' rolling drums.*

Cf. *Sedgwick's Life*, ii. 103.—Extract of a letter from J. Eaton, a private serving in the Battle of Aliwal, 1846, and a son of two of Sedgwick's servants :

"Also, my dear mother, tell Rhoda Harding I thought of her in the battle's heat, and that as I cut at the enemy and parried their thrusts my arm was strong on her account ; for I felt at that moment that I loved her more than ever, and may God Almighty bless her."

Sedgwick's comment : "This is, I think, exquisitely beautiful, for it is the strong language of pure feeling in the hour of severest trial."

My first version of this song was published in *Selections*, 1865 :

Lady, let the rolling drums  
Beat to battle where thy warrior stands ;  
Now thy face across his fancy comes  
And gives the battle to his hands.

Lady, let the trumpets blow,  
Clasp thy little babes about thy knee :  
Now their warrior father meets the foe  
And strikes him dead for thine and thee.

## CANTO V.

p. 83. line 6. *glimmering lanes* refers to the lines of tents just visible in the darkness.

p. 84. line 6. *mawkin*, kitchen-wench. [Cf. "malkin," *Coriolanus*, II. i. 224.—ED.]

p. 88. line 24. *mammoth bulk'd in ice*, bulky mammoth buried in ice.

p. 93. line 3. *the airy Giant's zone*, the stars in the belt of Orion.

p. 93. line 7. *morions* [steel helmets (Spanish, *morrión*). —ED.]

p. 94. line 12.

*Her that talk'd down the fifty wisest men.*

St. Catherine of Alexandria, niece of Constantine the Great. [The Emperor Maxentius during his persecution is related to have sent fifty of his wisest men to convert her from Christianity, but she combated and confuted them all.—ED.]

p. 96. lines 16, 17.

*and standing like a stately Pine*

*Set in a cataract on an island-crag.*

Taken from a torrent above Cauteretz. [Cf. *Remains of Arthur Hugh Clough*, Sept. 7, 1861, p. 269: "CAUTERETS, September 7.—I have been out for a walk with A. T. to a sort of island between two waterfalls, with pines on it, of which he retained a recollection from his visit thirty-one years ago, and which,

moreover, furnished a simile to *The Princess*. He is very fond of the place evidently, as it is more in the mountains than any other, and so far superior." In 1875 he took me to this same island and talked of Arthur Hallam and Clough.—ED.]

- p. 97. line 9. *Tomiris*, queen of the Massagetæ, who cut off the head of Cyrus the Great after defeating him, and dipped it in a skin which she had filled with blood and bade him, as he was insatiate of blood, to drink his fill, gorge himself with blood. [Cf. Herod. i. 212: ἦ μὲν σε ἐγὼ καὶ ἀπληστον ἐόντα αἵματος κορέσω. And of this threat she reminds the dead body of Cyrus after his victory: Σὺ μὲν ἐμὲ ζώουσάν τε καὶ νικέουσάν σε μάχῃ ἀπώλεσας παῖδα τὸν ἐμὸν ἐλὼν δόλω, σὲ δ' ἐγώ, κατὰπερ ἠπείλῃσα, αἵματος κορέσω.—ED.]

- p. 97. line 22.

*Gives her harsh groom for bridal-gift a scourge.*

An old Russian custom. [See Hakluyt's *Navigations*, 1599-1600.—ED.]

- p. 97. lines 23, 24.

*Of living hearts that crack within the fire  
Where smoulder their dead despots.*

Suttee in India.

- p. 97. line 25.

*Mothers,—that, all prophetic pity, fling  
Their pretty maids in the running flood.*

The "flood" is the Ganges.

p. 103. lines 14-18.

*As comes a pillar of electric cloud,*

\*            \*            \*            \*            \*

\*            \*            \*            *till it strikes*

*On a wood, and takes, and breaks, and cracks,  
and splits,*

*And twists the grain.*

Taken from the havoc worked by a storm in Tunby wood near Horncastle. One oak was wiapped round with bands of what looked like list, the strips of its bark turned inside out. Two concentric circles of trees were thrown down with their heads inward.

## CANTO VI.

*Home they brought her warrior dead.* I published this version of the song in the *Selections*, 1865 :

Home they brought him slain with spears,  
They brought him home at even-fall;  
All alone she sits and hears  
Echoes in his empty Hall,  
Sounding on the morrow.

The sun peep'd in from open field,  
The boy began to leap and prance,  
Rode upon his father's lance,  
Beat upon his father's shield,  
Oh hush my joy, my sorrow.

p. 107. line 16.

*Like that great dame of Lapidoth she sang.*

Cf. Judges iv. 4 and following.

p. 109. lines 18, 19.

*And over them the tremulous isles of light  
Slided.*

Spots of sunshine coming through the leaves,  
and seeming to slide from one to the other, as  
the procession of girls "moves under shade."

p. 111. line 19. *brede*, embroidery.

p. 113. line 16. *port*, for haven. Misprinted "part" in  
earlier editions.

p. 114. line 10. *dead prime*, earliest dawn.

p. 116. line 12. *azimuth*. [The azimuth of any point  
on a horizontal plane is the angle between a  
line drawn to that point, and a fixed line in  
the horizontal plane, usually chosen to be a  
line drawn due North. (Arab. *al*, the, and  
*samt*, way, quarter.)—ED.]

p. 116. line 19. *like the vermin in a nut*. The worm  
eats a nut and leaves behind but dry and  
bitter dust.

p. 119. line 10. *answer'd full of grief and scorn*. After  
this line, these among other lines have been  
omitted:

Go help the half-brain'd dwarf, Society,  
To find low motives unto noble deeds,  
To fix all doubt upon the darker side;

Go fitter thou for narrower neighbourhoods,  
Old talker, haunt where gossip breeds and  
seethes

And festers in provincial sloth! and you  
That think we sought to practise on a life  
Risked for our own, and trusted to our hands,  
What say you, Sir? you hear us; deem ye not  
'Tis all too like that even now we scheme,  
In one broad death confounding friend and  
foe,

To drug them all? revolve it; you are man,  
And therefore no doubt wise; but after this  
We brook no further insult but are gone.

## CANTO VII.

p. 126. lines 1-7.

*And she as one that climbs a peak to gaze  
O'er land and main, and sees a great black cloud  
Drag inward from the deeps, a wall of night,  
Blot out the slope of sea from verge to shore,  
And suck the blinding splendour from the sand,  
And quenching lake by lake and tarn by tarn  
Expunge the world.*

An approaching storm seen from the summit  
of Snowdon.

p. 127. line 12. *obtain'd*, prevailed.

p. 129. line 14. *Oppian law*. When Hannibal was  
nearing Rome a law was carried by C. Oppius,  
Trib. Pleb., B.C. 215, forbidding women to

wear more than half an ounce of gold, or brilliant dresses, and no woman was to come within a mile of Rome or of any town save on account of public sacrifices in a conveyance drawn by horses. [In B.C. 195 the Oppian Law was, in spite of Cato's protests, repealed. Livy, xxxiv. 8.—ED.]

p. 129. line 17. *Hortensia*. [She pleaded against the proposed tax on Roman matrons after the assassination of Julius Caesar which was to be raised in order to pay for the expenses of the war against Brutus and Cassius. Val. Max. viii. iii. § 3; Quint. i. i. § 6; Appian, *B.C.* iv. 32.—ED.]

p. 130. lines 21-23.

*Leapt fiery Passion from the brinks of death ;  
And I believed that in the living world  
My spirit closed with Ida's at the lips.*

This used to run :

Crown'd passion from the brinks of death,  
and up  
Along the shuddering senses struck the soul  
And closed on fire with Ida's at the lips.

p. 131. lines 3, 4.

*And left her woman, lovelier in her mood  
Than in her mould that other.*

Aphrodite passed before his brain, drowsy  
with weakness. (Cf. Hesiod, *Theog.* 190-191.)



p. 131. lines 23, 24

*Now lies the Earth all Danae to the stars,  
And all thy heart lies open unto me.*

Zeus came down to Danaë when shut up in the tower in a shower of golden stars.

p. 132. line 7. *Come down, O maid*, is said to be taken from Theocritus, but there is no real likeness except perhaps in the Greek Idyllic feeling.

[For simple rhythm and vowel music my father considered this Idyllic song, written in Switzerland—chiefly at Lauterbrunnen and Grindelwald—and descriptive of the waste Alpine heights and gorges and of the sweet rich valleys below, as among his most successful work.—ED.]

p. 132. line 19. *Death and Morning*. Death is the lifelessness on the high snow peaks.  
*nor cares to walk*. [Cf. *Hamlet*, I. i. 167.—ED.]

p. 132. line 23. *dusky doors*. The opening of the gorge is called dusky as a contrast with the snows all about.

p. 133. line 3. *moan of doves*.

Nec gemere aëria cessabit turtur ab ulmo.  
Virgil, *Ecl.* 1. 59.

p. 134. line 19.

*Stays all the fair young planet in her hands.*

[Cf. Ross Wallace's lines :

"The hand that rocks the cradle  
Is the hand that rules the world."

My father felt that woman must train herself more earnestly than heretofore to do the large work that lies before her, even though she may not be destined to be wife or mother, cultivating her understanding not her memory only, her imagination in its highest phases, her inborn spirituality and her sympathy with all that is pure, noble and beautiful, rather than mere social accomplishments; and that then and then only will she further the progress of humanity, then and then only men will continue to hold her in reverence.—ED.]

p. 137. line 14.

*From yearlong poring on thy pictured eyes.*

Next line :

Or some mysterious or magnetic touch,  
was omitted.

p. 137. lines 22, 23.

*my doubts are dead,*

*My haunting sense of hollow shows.*

You have become a real woman to me. [The realization of her womanhood was the magic touch which gave her reality and dispelled his haunting sense of the unreality of things. —ED.]

p. 138. line 2. *Approach and fear not.* Spoken in answer to Ida's

‘I have heard

Of your strange doubts: they well might be:  
I seem

A mockery to my own self. Never, Prince ;  
You cannot love me.'

The Prince had replied directly to these words :

'lift thine eyes ; my doubts are dead,  
My haunting sense of hollow shows' :  
and following out the train of thought, appeals  
to her to let her nature strike on his  
'Like yonder morning on the blind half-world.'  
It must be remembered that the Prince had  
overheard Ida's self-accusings and excusings  
(p. 133) :

but she still were loth,  
She still were loth to yield herself to one  
That wholly scorn'd, etc.

ED.]

### CONCLUSION.

This has been a good deal altered from the  
first version.

*p.* 140. line 14. '*You—tell us what we are.*' After  
this it ran :

who there began  
A treatise growing with it, and might have  
flow'd  
In axiom worthier to be graven on rock  
Than all that lasts of old world hieroglyph,  
Or lichen-fretted Rune and arrowhead !  
But that there rose a shout ; the gates were  
closed

At sundown, and the crowd were swarming  
     now,  
 To take their leave, about the garden rails,  
 And I and some went out, and mingled with  
     them.

These lines were omitted, and the forty-six lines (pp. 140-142), *who might have told to garden rails*, were inserted, written just after the disturbances in France, February 1848, when Louis Philippe was compelled to abdicate.

*p.* 142. line 13.

*No little lily-handed Baronet he.*

An imaginary character.

*p.* 142. line 16. *pine*, pine-apple.

*p.* 145. *MAUD; A MONODRAMA*. [First published in 1855. My father liked reading aloud this poem, a "Drama of the Soul," set in a landscape glorified by Love, and, according to Lowell, "The antiphonal voice to *In Memoriam*," which is the "Way of the Soul." The whole of it, except "O that 'twere possible" (see Note on Part II. iv.), was written at Farringford. My father said, "This poem of 'Maud or the Madness' is a little *Hamlet*, the history of a morbid, poetic soul, under the blighting influence of a recklessly speculative age. He is the heir of madness, an egoist with the

makings of a cynic, raised to a pure and holy love which elevates his whole nature, passing from the height of triumph to the lowest depth of misery, driven into madness by the loss of her whom he has loved, and, when he has at length passed through the fiery furnace, and has recovered his reason, giving himself up to work for the good of mankind through the unselfishness born of a great passion. The peculiarity of this poem is that different phases of passion in one person take the place of different characters. The whole of the stanzas where he is mad in Bedlam, from 'Dead, long dead' to 'Deeper, ever so little deeper,' were written in twenty minutes, and some mad doctor wrote to me that nothing since Shakespeare has been so good for madness as this."—ED.]

"At the opening of the drama, the chief person or hero of the action is introduced with scenery and incidents artistically disposed around his figure, so as to make the reader at once acquainted with certain facts in his history. Although still a young man, he has lost his father some years before by a sudden and violent death, following immediately upon unforeseen ruin brought about by an unfortunate speculation in which the deceased had engaged. Whether the death was the result of accident, or self-inflicted in a moment of despair, no one knows, but the son's mind has

been painfully possessed by a suspicion of villainy and foul play somewhere, because an old friend of his family became suddenly and unaccountably rich by the same transaction that had brought ruin to the dead. Shortly after the decease of his father, the bereaved young man, by the death of his mother, is left quite alone in the world. He continues thenceforth to reside in the retired village in which his early days have been spent, but the sad experiences of his youth have confirmed the bent of a mind constitutionally prone to depression and melancholy. Brooding in loneliness upon miserable memories and bitter fancies, his temperament as a matter of course becomes more and more morbid and irritable. He can see nothing in human affairs that does not awaken in him disgust and contempt. Evil glares out from all social arrangements, and unqualified meanness and selfishness appear in every human form, and he keeps to himself and chews the cud of cynicism and discontent apart from his kind. Such in rough outline is the figure the poet has sketched as the foundation and centre of his plan. . . . Since the days of his early youth up to the period when the immediate action of the poem is supposed to commence, the dreamy recluse has seen nothing of the family of the man to whom circumstances have inclined him to

attribute his misfortunes. This individual, although since his accession to prosperity the possessor of the neighbouring hall and of the manorial lands of the village, has been residing abroad. Just at this time, however, there are workmen up at the dark old place, and a rumour spreads that the absentees are about to return. This rumour, as a matter of course, stirs up afresh rankling memories in the breast of the recluse, and reawakens there old griefs. But with the group of associated recollections that come crowding forth, there is one of the child Maud, who was in happier days his merry playfellow. She will now, however, be a child no longer."—ROBERT JAMES MANN, M.D., F.R.A.S., etc.

## PART I.

[The division into Parts does not exist in the original 1855 edition, which contains xxvi. Sections.—ED.]

p. 145. 1. Before the arrival of Maud.

p. 145. 1. Verse i. *blood-red heath*. [My father would say that in calling heath "blood"-red the hero showed his extravagant fancy, which is already on the road to madness.—ED.]

p. 152. 1. Verse xix. [My father allowed me to print in these notes some few of the variorum readings

for which his friends had asked, but he said to me, "Very often what is published in my poems as the latest edition has been the original version in the first manuscript, so that there is no possibility of really tracing the history of what may seem to be a new word or passage. For instance, in the first edition of *Maud* I wrote, 'I will bury myself in *my books* and the Devil may pipe to his own,' which was afterwards altered to 'I will bury myself in *myself*;' etc. This was highly commended by the critics as an improvement on the original reading, whereas it was actually in the first MS. draft of the poem. Great works have been entirely spoilt for me by the modern habit of giving every various reading along with the text."—ED.]

p. 153. II. First sight of Maud.

p. 155. III. Visions of the night. *Broad-flung shipwrecking roar.* In the Isle of Wight the roar can be heard nine miles away from the beach.

[Many of the descriptions of Nature are taken from observations of natural phenomena at Farringford, although the localities in the poem are all imaginary.—ED.]

p. 156. IV. Mood of bitterness after fancied disdain.

p. 158. IV. Verse vi. *A monstrous eft*, the great old lizards of geology.



- p. 159. iv. Verse viii. *an Isis hid by the veil.* The great Goddess of the Egyptians. Ἐγὼ εἰμι πᾶν τὸ γεγονός, καὶ ὄν, καὶ ἐσόμενον, καὶ τὸν ἐμὸν πέπλον οὐδείς πω θνητὸς ἀπεκάλυψε.
- p. 162. v. He fights against his growing passion.
- p. 164. vi. First interview with Maud.
- p. 166. vi. Verse vi. *Assyrian Bull.* With hair curled like that of the bulls on Assyrian sculpture.
- p. 169. vii. He remembers his father and her father talking just before the birth of Maud.
- p. 171. viii. It cannot be pride that she did not return his bow. (Sec. iv. verse iii.)
- p. 172. ix. First sight of the young lord.
- p. 174. x. Verse iii.

*Last week came one to the county town.*

The *Westminster Review* said this was an attack on John Bright. I did not even know at the time that he was a Quaker. [It was not against Quakers but against peace-at-all-price men that the hero fulminates.]

This was originally verse iii., but I omitted it :

Will she smile if he presses her hand,  
This lord-captain up at the Hall?  
Captain! he to hold a command!  
He can hold a cue, he can pocket a ball;

And sure not a bantam cockerel lives  
 With a weaker crow upon English land,  
 Whether he boast of a horse that gains,  
 Or cackle his own applause. . . .  
 What use for a single mouth to rage  
 At the rotten creak of the State-machine ;  
 Tho' it makes friends weep and enemies smile,  
 That here in the face of a watchful age,  
 The sons of a gray-beard-ridden isle  
 Should dance in a round of an old routine.

*p.* 178. XII. Interview with Maud.

*p.* 178. XII. Verse i.

*Maud, Maud, Maud, Maud.*

Like the rooks' caw.

*p.* 178. XII. Verse iii.

*Maud is here, here, here.*

Like the call of the little birds.

*p.* 179. XII. Verse vi.

*And left the daisies rosy.*

Because if you tread on the daisy, it turns up  
 a rosy underside.

*p.* 181. XIII. Morbidly prophetic. He sees Maud's  
 brother, who will not recognise him.

*p.* 187. XVI. He will declare his love.

*p.* 189. XVII. Accepted.

*p.* 191. XVIII. Happy. The sigh in the cedar branches  
 seems to chime in with his own yearning. •

*p.* 192. XVIII. Verse iv. The *sad astrology* is modern astronomy, for of old astrology was thought to sympathise with and rule man's fate. The stars are "cold fires," for tho' they emit light of the highest intensity, no perceptible warmth reaches us. His newer astrology describes them (verse viii.) as "soft splendours."

*p.* 193. XVIII. Verse vii.

*Not die; but live a life of truest breath.*

This is the central idea—the holy power of Love.

*p.* 193. XVIII. Verse vii.

*The dusky strand of Death inwoven here.*

Image taken from the coloured strands inwoven in coloured ropes, *e.g.* in the Admiralty rope.

*p.* 203. XXI. Before the Ball.

*p.* 204. XXII. In the Hall-Garden.

## PART II.

*p.* 208. I. The Phantom (after the duel with Maud's brother).

*p.* 211. II. In Brittany. The shell undestroyed amid the storm perhaps symbolises to him his own first and highest nature preserved amid the storms of passion.

p. 213. II. Verse vi.

*But that of Lamech is mine.*

"I have slain a man to my wounding,  
and a young man to my hurt" (Gen. iv. 23).

p. 215. III. He felt himself going mad.

p. 216. IV. Haunted (after Maud's death).

"O that 'twere possible" appeared first in the *Tribute*, 1837. Sir John Simeon years after begged me to weave a story round this poem, and so *Maud* came into being.

p. 221. V. In the madhouse.

p. 223. V. Verse iv.

*Who told him we were there?*

*i.e.* the brother.

p. 223. V. Verse v. *gray old wolf*. [Cf. Part I. XIII. iii. —ED.]

p. 223. V. Verse v. *Crack them now for yourself*. For his son is, he thinks, dead.

p. 223. V. Verse vi.

*And curse me the British vermin, the rat.*

The Norwegian rat has driven out the old English rat. [The Jacobites asserted that the brown Norwegian rat came to England with the House of Hanover, 1714, and hence called it "the Hanover rat."—ED.]

p. 225. V. Verse viii. *the keeper* = the brother.

*p.* 225. v. Verse viii. *a dead man*, that is, himself in his fancy.

*p.* 225. v. Verse ix. *what will the old man say?* Maud's father.

The second corpse is Maud's brother, the lover's father being the first corpse, whom the lover thinks that Maud's father murdered.

### PART III.

*p.* 227. vi. Sane, but shattered. Written when the cannon was heard booming from the battle-ships in the Solent before the Crimean War.

[Some of the reviews accused my father of loving war, and urging the country to war, charges which he sufficiently answered in the "Epilogue to the Heavy Brigade":

And who loves War for War's own sake  
Is fool, or crazed, or worse;  
But let the patriot-soldier take  
His meed of fame in verse.

Indeed, he looked passionately forward to the Parliament of man, the Federation of the world.

What the hero in *Maud* says is that the sins of the nation, "civil war" as he calls them, are deadlier in their effect than what is commonly called war, and that they may be in a measure subdued by the war between

nations, which is an evil more easily recognised. Cf. Gladstone's *Gleanings*, vol. ii., on *Maud*.—ED.]

- p. 227. VI. [On the 16th of March 1854 my father was looking through his study window at the planet Mars, "as he glow'd like a ruddy shield on the Lion's breast," and so determined to name his second son, who was born on that day, Lionel.—ED.]

END OF VOL. IV.

